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ATTITUDE CONCEPTUALISATION AND USE IN
THE MAJOR AMERICAN VOTING STUDIES:
A CRITIQUE

by



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A THESIS

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ABSTRACT

Attitudes are utilized as key explanatory variables in voting behavior studies. They are the most popular concept in contemporary social psychology, as well. In this thesis, the usage of the attitude concept in these two areas is examined from both an historical and an analytical perspective. An attempt is made to determine the extent to which the "landmark" American voting behavior studies have benefited from the development of attitude theory within social psychology. The basic conclusions reached in the thesis are that the transfer of learning has not been great between these two areas, and that this has hindered the persuasiveness of the attitudinal explanations in the voting studies.

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INTRODUCTION

The application of the behavioral approach in Political Science has been, perhaps, nowhere more successful than in the American voting studies of the period from the mid-1940's to the present. The scholars who produced these analyses have been both eclectic and innovative in their use of data on individual and group reactions to political stimuli. At the same instance, they have shifted the analytical discourse from one stressing the explanations of the political economist, the historian, or the jurist to one that emphasizes the theories of Sociology and Psychology. The returns to such shifts of explanatory style have been clearly recognizable. As one set of authors state: "The greater success of the psychological forces we have considered here is of course chiefly due to their greater immediacy to behavior."¹

Among the many kinds of explanations that the voting behavior analyst "borrowed" from the realm of the social psychologist were that set which rely upon the notion of "attitude" as a determining factor in human behavior. This development is, of course, not surprising since the concept of "attitude" has been one of the most popularly used notions

in all the social sciences during the past two decades. Yet, this concept has had a varied and somewhat chequered career within its own parent discipline, Psychology. It has clearly meant different things to different theorists at different times since its inception within that discipline. Attendant to these differences of conceptualization, a large theoretical and research literature has grown over the period. Controversies have flourished, died, and have been reborn. Each of the major schools of thought in modern psychology appears to have developed a position regarding the nature and influence of attitudes. Many of these developments predated the introduction of the concept into the study of American voting behavior. At the same time, matters concerning the study of attitudes and attitude change have dominated the literature of social psychology during the period in which the major American voting studies were published.

Recognition of these concerns on the part of psychologists raises a natural question for the political scientist: To what degree has there been a positive transference of learning from the work of attitude psychologists--past and present--to the work of those voting analysts who have used attitudes as key explanatory factors? The chapters that follow represent an attempt to ascertain the answer to this question. In doing so, I will confine myself to a consideration of the four major American voting studies published in

the past twenty-five years: The People's Choice, Voting, The Voter Decides, and The American Voter. The publication dates of these four "landmark" studies span a period from 1944 to 1960. Over that period each in turn has provided a paradigm for lesser voting studies and has served as a stimulus to the creation of a truly vast literature on American voting behavior. To survey and evaluate this entire literature would be an unmanageable task in a thesis-length document. Instead, I have opted for the more economical and manageable task of considering only the four "model" voting studies.

In order to assess the degrees of transfer of learning from one academic area to another one must, of course, make clear the main currents of theory and research in the former area, as well as in the latter one. Such an awareness sets the context within which the reader is able to discern the transfer that has taken place. In the first part of the thesis I have attempted to provide such a contextual backdrop. This part is composed of three chapters. The first of these traces the historical development of the concept "attitude" through its early years and up to approximately 1950. The analysis there follows the history of the concept in terms of those particular schools of thought which appear to have made distinct theoretical contributions to the attitude literature of that period. These schools of thought are illustrated through discussion of those attitude psychologists of the period who are seen to be "members". For

example, the Neo-Gestalt group are illustrated through consideration of the work of Lewin, Asch, Sherif, and Heider. The use of this tactic of presentation serves to elucidate basic principles underlying the attitude concept as well as provide a basis for examination of major points of disagreement concerning the concept.

The second chapter of Part I continues the historical thread of the discussion in the previous chapter, carrying on the developmental analysis from 1950 to the present. The work of contemporary attitude theorists is classified and discussed within the framework of four distinct approaches to the subject matter: cognitive consistency, judgmental processes, learning-behavior theory, and "bridge-building". It will be shown that many of the basic principles derived from the earlier schools of thought can be seen as an analogue to a contemporary one.

The final chapter of Part I is designed to trace the major conceptual problems surrounding the attitude concept. Discussion of these concerns, which include questions of definitions, distinctions, and components, provides not only an illustration of the type of problems that have typically confronted attitude theorists, it also provides a more formal background against which attitude conceptualization, as developed by the major American voting studies, can be examined in Part II.

The elucidation of the main currents of theory and research in attitude psychology is only part of the exercise involved in comparing features of it with voting behavior studies. In an effort to complete the comparative perspective, the second part of this thesis is therefore directed toward a similar analysis of the major American voting studies. This part is composed of three chapters. The first of these chapters traces the development and usage of the attitude concept in these four works. Not only does this discussion point out the role which attitudes have played in voting analysis, it also closely examines the manner in which each study has conceptually developed the attitude concept. Particular attention is also devoted to the theoretical orientations underlying each work, in an effort to ascertain the extent to which each has drawn formally, as well as implicitly, upon relevant attitude-theoretical literature.

The second chapter of Part II continues the discussion of the attitude concept by focusing on its operational treatment within each of the voting studies. Problems endemic to operationalization of the attitude concept are identified. Central aspects of each study are then examined to determine if they have been cognizant of these difficulties.

The main currents of theory and research in both attitude psychology and in the four major American voting studies have been discussed. The third chapter of Part II

will continue this commentary by attempting to create a dialogue between these two areas. To this end, the analysis of this chapter deals with an evaluation of the attitudinal explanations utilized by the voting studies from the perspective of attitude psychologists. The author has thus placed himself in the position of interpreting the voting studies from his knowledge of particular schools of thought examined in Part I, as well as the "members" of these schools.

The natural question which arises from such a discussion as provided by this thesis is one related to an overall evaluation of the "worth" of such a project. As a consequence, in Part III attention is devoted to consideration of questions such as these. More particularly, the discussion, which also provides a summary, deals with those recommendations for future research in voting behavior which seem to be suggested by the conclusions reached in this thesis.

FOOTNOTES, INTRODUCTION

¹Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, The American Voter (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1960), p. 74.

PART ONE

CHAPTER I

EARLY FORMULATION OF ATTITUDE CONCEPTS

Attitude is a concept which has enjoyed cyclical popularity. Much of its original acceptance can be traced to Thomas and Znaniecki's famous study of the Polish peasant where they equated social psychology with the study of attitudes.¹ This represented a rather pioneering statement as the attitude concept was relatively new and unexplored at this time.² By 1935 this concept had reached such popularity that Allport was able to state: "The concept of attitude is probably the most distinctive and indispensable concept in contemporary American social psychology."³ The concept then declined in popularity in the forties and fifties as the study of group dynamics became central in importance.⁴ However, during the sixties the study of attitudes has regained favor and, as McGuire notes, it is now the most popular area of social-psychological research.⁵

Since the early popularity with the attitude concept had reached its peak in the late thirties, Allport's article provides a useful point of departure, as it represents an exhaustive survey of the attitude literature to that point. One of Allport's concerns rests with tracing the historical

development of the attitude concept. After following his analysis, one is inclined to concur with Kiesler, Collins, and Miller who stated that, "Individual differences is probably the major theme throughout the intellectual history of the concept of attitude."⁶ That is, attitude became a useful psychological variable to account for the differences in individual behavior. This characterization is both interesting and important, since it will be seen later that the relationship between attitudes and behavior has been theoretically controversial and empirically undeveloped.

At any rate, Allport proceeds by advancing several definitions of attitude. Examining these he is led to conclude that a common thread runs through all these definitions, namely, attitude as a "preparation of readiness for response."⁷ From this point he advances his own definition.

An attitude is a mental and neural state of readiness, organized through experience, exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response to all objects and situations with which it is related.⁸

According to this definition an attitude has at least five aspects: (1) it is a mental and neural state (2) of readiness (3) organized (4) through experience (5) exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response. Thus, many theoretical issues of definition are raised. For the moment these various aspects should serve as a background against which further definitional concerns may be placed.

Of particular interest will be the type of meaning the various schools of thought tend to associate with the attitude concept. The discussion of these five aspects will be taken up in Chapter III as a means of examining the major issues of empirical or conceptual consequence that have arisen out of attempts at definition.

Allport also goes on to discuss such topics as conditions of attitude formation, attitudes as motives, positive and negative attitudes, specific and general attitudes, public and private attitudes, common and individual attitudes, and the measurement of attitudes. Thus, his major concern rests with the delineation of the domain of attitudes.

At this point the discussion will examine various schools of thought, focusing on their attitude-theoretical contributions. By examining these early schools, and some of the main ideas of some of the major theorists within them, it will be possible to begin to delineate some of the principal notions which have underlaid, and still underlie, the theoretical study of attitudes.

The Neo-Gestalt School

Examination of the tenets of Gestalt psychology will indicate that many of their basic principles have underlaid attitude-theoretical developments. The analysis will also examine the contributions, and the impact, made by some of the major theorists in this area.

The Gestalt movement, with its founders Max Wertheimer, Wolfgang Kohler, and Kurt Koffka, arose in Germany around 1920 as a reaction to atomistic psychology. The early contributions of this group dealt mainly with problems of perception. Before considering the basic features which were derived from study in this area, let us examine the underlying feature of the Gestalt movement. As Asch has stated:

The source of the gestalt (sic) movement can be traced to one paramount concern. As a rule the events of mental life possess form, sense, and value; these are its striking characteristics.⁹

This statement not only points out the basic concern of the Gestalt movement, it epitomizes the movement's reaction to the analytical adumbration characteristic of the approach of atomistic psychology. Therefore, it was with this sort of underlying commitment that the Gestalt movement began.

The study of apparent movement by Wertheimer (1912-1920) marked the formal beginning of Gestalt theory.¹⁰ Basically, his study of apparent movement revealed two important findings. The first of these indicated that perceived movement cannot be split into successive stationary sensations--that stimulus events cooperate to produce a new, unitary outcome.¹¹ His second finding involved the Gestalt account of grouping in perception. This is the view that, "certain parts of the visual field were seen to cohere and to form units that separate themselves from the surrounding space

and from other units."¹² Thus, the Gestalt notion of figure-ground configurations was developed. Further, Wertheimer described what he felt were fundamental principles of grouping in perception, namely, proximity, similarity, closure, common fate, and good continuation. Thus it was that Wertheimer was able to state the fundamental formula of Gestalt theory.

There are wholes, the behavior of which is not determined by that of their individual elements, but where the part-processes are themselves determined by the intrinsic nature of the whole.¹³

The following comment by Solomon Asch highlights the importance of this notion:

. . . (D)iscoveries demonstrated that identical stimulation, at different points in time, of a given region can produce markedly different effects, depending upon the stimulation occurring in neighboring regions.¹⁴

And, it is within this context that the Gestalt notions of grouping, organization, and "environmentalism" (i.e. context or situation) are given significance in terms of attitude psychology.

Deutsch and Krauss treat "field interrelatedness" and "the law of Pragnanz" as the two basic notions of Gestalt theory, and describe them as follows.

Essentially, there are two key notions. One is that psychological phenomena should be conceived as occurring in a "field"--as a part of a system of co-existing and mutually interdependent factors having certain properties as a system that are not deducible from knowledge of the isolated elements of the system. The second

basic notion is that certain states of the psychological field are simpler and more orderly than other states and that psychological processes act to make the state of the field as "good" as prevailing conditions allow.¹⁵

The first of these notions refers explicitly to "Gestalt", form, configuration, or structure, i.e., things tend to be seen as wholes (the nature of the whole depending upon the background against which it is viewed). The second notion deals with the nature of the organization. This is the so-called "Law of Pragnanz": that "experienced wholes tend toward the greatest regularity, simplicity, and clarity possible under the given conditions".¹⁶ It can be readily observed that both principles depend very heavily on an environmentalist point of view.

Deutsch and Krauss note three implications the Gestalt theory of perceptual organization has for social psychology. These warrant discussion here since, in many ways, they are still grounding principles for many of the later cognitive theorists. First, it is implied that:

1. If perceptions are organized, then some aspects of perception will remain constant despite a change in all of the elements in the situation being perceived, so long as the interrelations among the elements remain the same.¹⁷

As an example of this point, Deutsch and Krauss give the analogy that a football game will still be identifiable even though substitutes replace the original players. Consequently,

one sees that it is the interrelationships among the elements which are of importance, not the elements themselves. This point of view has been clearly expressed in Heider's theory of cognitive balance, and is the prevailing notion among cognitive consistency theorists today. That is, in attitude-theoretical terms, these people focus on the interrelationships among attitudinal components.

The second implication noted states that:

2. If perceptions are organized, then the perception of any element will be influenced by the total field of which it is a part.¹⁸

This statement makes explicit the notion of situatedness. Thus, the following discussion of theorists like Lewin, Asch, Sherif, and Heider will reveal that they were social psychologists in the sense that they were also very concerned with the effect of situations. For example, Sherif developed a notion of judgments occurring against a background of "anchors" formed through reference group experience. Later theorists like Rokeach still make the notion of context instrumental in their theories.

Moving on to the third implication, it is asserted that:

3. If perception is organized, then some of its characteristics of organization will emerge; these will be the interrelations of the entities being perceived rather than the entities themselves.¹⁹

This is very similar to the first implication except that it places emphasis upon dynamic aspects. It is this sort of notion that is made explicit in Festinger's theory of cognitive dissonance. Thus, the dissonant relations take on motivational status. Hence, they can trigger behavior and determine its direction.

Subsequently it will become more evident that many of the basic principles of Gestalt psychology still persist among cognitive theorists today. As a means of getting to the contemporary period, where cognitive consistency theories have dominated social psychology, I would like to consider such "Neo-Gestaltists" as Lewin, Asch, Sherif, and Heider. It is my feeling that these people are representative of this school of thought. More particularly, they are individuals whom I feel clearly have had a tremendous impact on the attitude-theoretical field.

Lewin. Although Lewin remained somewhat aloof from the attitude preoccupation, he nonetheless had a tremendous impact on many theorists--in particular, balance and cognitive consistency theorists. (In fact, many of the present-day theorists in these areas were students under Lewin and obviously reflect aspects of his notions in their work.) This impact would seem to be derived from his general attempt to integrate all the determinants of behavior under one dynamic, cognitive system. As Ostrum has stated,

Lewin's contribution to the development of theory in the area of attitude change is due . . . to his more general view of man as a cognitive organism reacting in integrated fashion to the influences impinging on him.²⁰

What is essentially at issue here are Lewin's notions of "life space", "time perspective",²¹ etc., and his dynamic concepts such as "tension", "valence", "force", "locomotion",²² etc., as explanatory variables. For example, consider the following:

The basic statements of a field theory are that (a) behavior has to be derived from a totality of coexisting facts, (b) these coexisting factors have the characteristic of a "dynamic field" in so far as the state of any part of this field depends on every other part of the field.²³

In such a formulation behavior becomes a function of the person and the environment, and depends on the "present field", which includes the "psychological past", "psychological present", and "psychological future".²⁴ Thus, such factors as needs, motivation, goals, ideals, anxiety, mood, etc., become relevant within this time-situation context.

Although Lewin's main impact was originally on the study of group dynamics, many of his principles have carried over into the attitude-theoretical field. In particular, his field theory gives explicit recognition to the necessity of studying psychological events in their interrelationships with one another. The development of these system-like principles, combined with the typical Gestalt focus on organization

in a simple and coherent fashion led directly to an early version of attitude consistency theories. Thus an individual was seen as organizing his cognitions in a simple and coherent fashion; namely, a consistent one. Lewin, therefore, has given dynamic qualities to some of the rather basic Gestalt notions of organization, simplicity, and context. A similar application of Gestalt principles and notions at that same point in time can be seen in the work of Solomon Asch, to which we turn next.

Asch. It would appear that, "Asch's point of view represents a generalization of the Gestalt notion that perceptual organization tends to be as good as the prevailing conditions allow."²⁵ Thus, it has been said that "much of his research has consisted of demonstrating the Gestalt tenet that social experience is organized so as to be coherent and meaningful."²⁶

Asch places emphasis not only on perception, but on the meaning an individual attaches to an object or communication; and, on the impact of background or contextual factors on the meaning associated with the object or the communication.²⁷ Further, his experiments on the development of social norms, as well as his work on attitude formation and change, reflects these characteristics--i.e., of social learning evolving within particular situations--quite well. The importance of these factors are obvious in Asch's discussion

of some of his early experiments.

The judgments of a single situation are related to each other by a person in accordance with an underlying attitude of acceptance or rejection. The strength of this tendency varies from subject to subject and with the situation to be judged. . . . It is possible that one factor determining the extent of the relationship is the emotional value of the stimulus.²⁸

And, it is clear from Asch's ideas and findings that the emotional value of the stimulus would depend upon its relationship to those social norms relevant in learning processes. Moreover, the Gestalt notion of the interrelationship of parts underlies much of Asch's work. Illustrative of this, the quotation above makes explicit the interrelationship between judgments, attitudes, and situations. Furthermore, Asch was also concerned with systemic interrelations at the micro-level. A concern that is implied, for example, in his statement that "A change in one aspect of an attitude changes every other aspect of the attitude."²⁹

In general, Asch gave explicit recognition to contextual factors, and the meaning an individual associates with them, largely as a result of early learning occurring in the context of social norms. It is not surprising then that his student, Sherif, and his associate, Cantril, should also reflect these principles in their work.

Sherif and Cantril. Sherif and Cantril were primarily concerned with the role of perceptual processes in attitude

formation and change.³⁰ They felt that the first and most fundamental phase of attitude acquisition was the perceptual phase.

Since attitudes are not innate states of readiness, since they are formed in relation to particular objects, persons, institutions, values or norms, the individual has first to come into contact with them. And coming into contact is a perceptual situation.³¹

Further, attitudes were regarded as being rooted in social norms.

The affective property of attitudes with non-motivational sources is due to the fact that these attitudes are formed in relation to social values or norms which are in themselves standardized affective fixations.³²

Also, some attitudes are regarded as ego-involved.

Another important reason why attitudes are affectively charged is the fact that many attitudes prescribe the individual's relations, status, or role with respect to other individuals or groups. . . .³³

Thus, both the affective and the ego-involvement properties of attitudes are seen to derive from the social aspects of the situations in which attitudes are formed and of those in which they have their impact.

As will be seen in Chapter II, Sherif has continued to use these basic principles in his more recent work. Attitudes thus become "anchors", formed through reference group experience with its attendant social norms, which are utilized in making judgments in particular social situations.

Since the principles of perception were derived from the study of psycho-physical judgments, it is not surprising that Sherif and Cantril came to regard attitude as a representation of a judgment in a social situation.

Having stated that Lewin gave emphasis to the development of dynamic cognitive systems, I think it is fair to state that Asch, Sherif, and Cantril have placed emphasis upon the social situation in which attitudes are formed and consequently utilized. These theorists were all influenced by Gestalt notions. In the next section, I will discuss the work of the fourth major Neo-Gestaltist theorist of the earlier period, Fritz Heider, who, in the form of his cognitive balance system theory based on Gestalt principles, provides a formal link with the contemporary cognitive theorists.

Heider. Heider is particularly important to this discussion in a number of respects. As one writer has put it:

In an important sense, history began with Heider's paper (1944) entitled "Social perception and phenomenal causality," soon followed by "Attitudes and cognitive organization" (1946). . . . Virtually all subsequent developments owe something to Heider and some of them very much indeed--particularly to his basic assumption that an imbalanced set of cognitions is associated with 'tension' and the arousal of forces which tend to restore or to attain states of balance.³⁴

In this sense, it is important to discuss Heider's formulations in some detail, as this will facilitate the discussion of some of these subsequent developments in Chapter II.

Heider represented the culmination of Gestalt tenets into an explicit formulation having great relevance for attitude theory. One of his primary concerns was understanding how people perceive interpersonal events. Following the Gestalt tenets of perception, Heider's major thesis was that people seek to develop an orderly and coherent view of their environment.³⁵ This interest in the individual's cognitive representation of the environment ultimately led to his theory of cognitive balance in which he depicts people, objects, and events as related within a dynamic cognitive system, that is, dynamic in the sense that an individual has a need or motive to maintain balanced and harmonious relations between cognitive elements over time and situations. Thus, balanced or harmonious relationships become the "motive" force of "good" organization.

How, then, were these two basic tenets of Gestalt psychology--order and simplicity--formalized in his theory of cognitive balance? Let us begin with a consideration of balance.

The concept of a balanced state designates a situation in which the perceived units and the expressed sentiments co-exist without stress; there is thus no pressure toward change, either in the cognitive organization or in the sentiment.³⁶

Separate entities comprise a unit when they are perceived as belonging together--this constitutes the unit relation. The sentiment relation is attitudinal and refers to a person's

evaluation of something. These two relations, which may be positive or negative (degrees of relations are not considered), are used to describe the relation characterizing any of the three pairs of cognitive elements--person P, other person O, and object X. Thus, a sentiment relation may be characterized by such statements as the following: P likes or admires O, P approves of X, P rejects O, and P condemns X. Since the unit relation depends upon the perception of things belonging together, entities may be related through similarity, causality, ownership, etc. In particular, these properties are seen to be attributed to the relations by the perceiver.

Having introduced the basic concepts, a more detailed, although not much more rigorous,³⁷ statement of the system is made.

By a balanced state is meant a situation in which the relations among the entities fit together harmoniously; there is no stress towards change. A basic assumption is that sentiment relations and unit relations tend toward a balanced state. This means that sentiments are not entirely independent of the perception of unit connections between entities and that the latter, in turn, are not entirely independent of sentiments. Sentiments and unit relations are mutually interdependent. It also means that if a balanced state does not exist, then forces toward this state will arise. If a change is not possible, the state of imbalance will produce tension.³⁸

Heider then goes on to make a more formal statement of the conditions of balance:

A dyad is balanced if the relations between the two entities are all positive (L and U) or all negative (DL and not U). Disharmony results when relations of different sign character exist.

A triad is balanced when all three of the relations are positive or when two of the relations are negative and one is positive. Imbalance occurs when two of the relations are positive and one is negative. The case of three negative relations is somewhat ambiguous and will be discussed later.³⁹

Although Heider makes this statement about the ambiguity of the three negative relations, he does not do much to clarify it.

Conclusion. Perhaps the most important conclusion which can be derived from the above is that the Gestalt school of thought has focused attention on the individual within a situation--in particular, on his cognitive representation of his environment. This orientation, guided by the basic Gestalt tenets of order and simplicity, represents the analogue to the modern consistency theories, which have become by far the most popular attitude theories. Thus, the modern consistency theories are predicated upon notions of order--i.e. an individual is seen as organizing his cognitive elements--and simplicity--i.e. the order given to these cognitive elements is a consistent one. Therefore, with regard to attitudes, much of the focus for cognitive theorists rests with the individual's organization of his attitudes, and his attitude components, in a consistent fashion. The Gestalt notion of a dynamic cognitive system, made explicit by Lewin,

also underlies cognitive formulations. As a result, change in a cognitive element will produce change in other, related cognitive elements according to some postulate of consistency.

Certain rather obvious problem areas are readily apparent from the above. For example, what is consistency? How is it maintained? Is there room for inconsistency? If so, how much, and under what conditions? How does inconsistency arise? How is it resolved? The discussion in Chapter II will attempt to illustrate these problems by focusing on particular consistency formulations. Subsequently, the discussion in Chapter III will examine the major areas of controversy in the attitude-theoretical literature. However, at this point I would like to continue the discussion of the earlier period by examining the learning-behavior school of thought.

The Learning-Behavior School of Thought

Although this approach to the study of attitudes has not stimulated much theorizing and supportive research, there have been a few attempts to apply the principles of learning-behavior theory to the study of attitudes. Before discussing two examples of this, namely, Doob and the Yale Communication Group, I would like to examine learning-behavior theory.

Since there appear to be as many learning theories, as there are learning theorists, it is rather difficult to articulate basic learning principles. However, "the experimental

study of learning has been dominated by the use of two paradigms, known as classical conditioning and instrumental conditioning."⁴⁰ The latter of these derives largely from Thorndike and the former from Pavlov. Pavlov's notions of classical conditioning have been utilized by Staats to describe the establishment of attitudes. This work will receive further discussion in Chapter II. The notion of instrumental conditioning, that "a response, to be conditioned, must occur before it can be rewarded or punished,"⁴¹ has been developed by Hull and Spence, among others. Hull's learning theory was applied by Doob in his discussion of attitudes. Skinner also follows in Thorndike's tradition, particularly with his radical behaviorism.⁴² Thus, Skinner, and his followers, have "dissolved the dispositional concept of attitude into overt behaviors."⁴³ As a result, this group would effect attitude change by shaping verbal behavior through the control of reinforcement.

Thus, the above has described the two basic paradigms in learning-behavior theory which have underlaid subsequent developments in this field. They are identifiable in subsequent attitude theorizing as well.

Other general characteristics of learning-behavior theory have been outlined by Collins.⁴⁴ Learning theorists have focused on the adaptive aspects of human experience, "on the techniques by which the organism goes about the

process of survival."⁴⁵ Given this focus, behavior theory consequently looks at an individual's past interaction with his environment as a means of explaining current features such as attitudes. Consequently, behavior theorists focus on relationships between objectively measured stimulus variables and overt behavior (therefore S-R psychology). Finally, the learning or behavior theories have relied heavily upon the data obtained from the study of animal learning. Associated with these principles are many important concepts, not the least of which are reinforcement and generalization. Reinforcement, in the fashion preferred by the particular theorist, is of particular importance in the establishment or learning of attitudes. Generalization, referring both to stimuli and responses, is an important mechanism whereby the attitude is extended, or is "generalized" to include other similar stimuli and responses. Basically, what is of importance here for the study of attitudes has been the focus of learning-behavior theory on observables that everyone can see such as observable stimuli and observable responses, and the consequent rigorous research orientation focusing on these variables. This provides a major point of differentiation with the Gestalt school whose primary focus was on individual cognitive processes.⁴⁶ Consequently, the learning-behavior school has tended to attribute low status to the Gestalt view of attitude as a "dispositional" concept.

At this point I would like to turn to a discussion of Doob's approach and works as well as those of the Yale Communication Group. These two approaches present a contrast: Doob utilizing a formal learning theory, and the Yale Group, in a rather eclectic fashion, applying the categories of "stimulus-response analysis, reinforcement, generalization, and conflict to empirically derived problems of persuasive communication and attitude change."⁴⁷ Thus, the former provides a situation for a test of a learning theory, whereas the latter utilizes principles of learning theory to establish the problem and to suggest lines of interpretation.

Doob. Leonard Doob represents a systematic attempt in applying learning theory to the study of attitudes.⁴⁸ Doob made an important contribution to the study of attitudes merely by suggesting the relevance of learning theory. Of particular interest is his definition of an attitude. "Attitude is defined as an implicit, drive-producing response considered socially significant in the individual's society."⁴⁹

Elaborating on this definition, Doob outlines five aspects of an attitude.

An attitude is:

- (1) an implicit response
- (2) which is both (a) anticipatory and (b) mediating in reference to patterns of overt response,
- (3) which is evoked (a) by a variety of stimulus patterns (b) as a result of previous learning or of gradients of generalization and discrimination,
- (4) which is itself cue- and drive-producing,
- (5) and which is considered socially significant in the individual's society.⁵⁰

Unfortunately, Doob's paper was only theoretical and stimulated little supportive research.

However, as will be seen later, Doob's analysis has created a problem for later learning-behavior attitude theorists. In effect, Doob's analysis has reduced the study of attitudes to a study of behavior. Attitude, as an implicit response, can only be inferred from behavior. However, Doob also recognized that any particular behavior might be determined by a number of factors--other attitudes, habits, etc.--depending upon the situation. Therefore, attitudes cannot be inferred directly from behavior. The logical implication of such a position is that it is very hard to study attitudes, and it makes more sense to look only at behavior (i.e. an observable).

The Yale Communication Group. The Yale Communication Group, headed by Carl Hovland, has been "one of the major forces shaping contemporary research and theory on attitude change."⁵¹ As previously mentioned, this group was very eclectic in its approach, and made it abundantly clear that it was not presenting a systematic theory.⁵² What it does present are a number of "working assumptions", many of which are derived from learning theory.⁵³

Opinions and attitudes are two key concepts in their discussion.⁵⁴ Both are seen as implicit responses, although opinion is regarded as designating a broader class of

anticipations and expectations. Attitude is thus more specific, referring to those implicit responses which are "oriented toward approaching or avoiding a given object, person, group, or symbol."⁵⁵ The authors then postulate that one of the main ways that persuasive communications produce attitude change is through opinion change. At this point, some of the learning theory principles involved become much clearer. For example, the presentation of a persuasive communication is assumed to evoke two responses from an individual--he first thinks of his own answer and then the answer of the communicator. However, merely repeating (practise) the communicator's answer is not sufficient to bring about acceptance of a new opinion. This is contingent upon incentives--i.e. the individual must be motivated to accept the new implicit response. Incentives include anticipated rewards and punishments, and the individual's own logical reasoning. Further, it is assumed there are three main classes of stimuli present in the communication situation which are capable of producing shifts in incentive--the observable characteristics of the perceived source of the communication, the setting, including the responses of others, and the content elements of the communication. (Note the emphasis on the stimulus characteristics--i.e. the observables--of the communication situation. This is consistent with the behavioristic focus on objectively quantifiable variables.)

Following this, the authors identify their research

task as the analysis of four factors: (1) the communicator who transmits the communication; (2) the stimuli transmitted by the communicator; (3) the audience responding to the communication; and (4) the responses made by the audience to the communication.⁵⁶

As previously indicated, this initial work by Hovland, Janis, and Kelley has stimulated a tremendous amount of research.⁵⁷ Of particular importance was its emphasis, consistent with learning-behavior theory, on the analytical experimental study of attitudes.

Conclusion. As will become more obvious in Chapter II, the direct application of learning-behavior theory to the study of attitudes has not been great. However, many of the learning principles have been utilized profitably, e.g., some of the attitude studies have utilized principles drawn both from learning-behavior theory and Gestalt psychology. Of particular interest has been the advancement of the view of attitude as an implicit, mediating response. As indicated, this has created problems for behavior theorists interested in the study of attitudes. That is, if they are going to utilize behavior theory notions to describe attitudes, how can they do so in such a fashion as to overcome Doob's conclusions? Further examination of attitude definitions will be discussed in Chapter III.

Finally, the learning-behavior approach, with its emphasis upon rigorous research, has made an important methodological contribution. Concern with attitude measurement has permeated all areas of attitude research in the contemporary period. As a result, the measuring or operational school per se is no longer identifiable, as it once was. Nevertheless, I would now like to consider the impact which it has had.

The Measuring (or Operationalist) School

This school of thought is relevant to this discussion in that it has stimulated a particular attitude conception, namely an operational one. In effect, the attitude is defined by the test measurement. This conception is well expressed by Green in his article on attitude measurement.⁵⁸ Conceptually, Green feels that attitude measurement involves sampling a behavior universe. Thus, he regards attitude as a consistency or predictability of response. He states:

. . . attention is focused on the characteristic of attitude that is basic to all attitude measurement: response covariation. In each measurement method, covariation among responses is related to the variation of an underlying variable. The latent attitude is defined by the correlations among responses.⁵⁹

Therefore, attitude is a summarizing convenience.

Thus, having defined attitude as a latent variable whose meaning is derived from the covariation of responses in some attitude universe, Green goes on to state:

To obtain a more precise definition of an attitude, we need a mathematical model that relates the responses, or observed variables, to the latent variable. Each psychological scaling method either states or implies such a model. The problem of measuring an attitude is one of selecting a scaling model by which the response data can be related to the attitude variable.⁶⁰

Thurstone, Likert, and Guttman shall attract our attention in this section, not only because of chronology, but also since their scaling methods represent the three major types of attitude scales.⁶¹ As Shaw and Wright state:

In short, the typical attitude scale measures the acceptance of evaluative statements about the attitude object. The attitude toward the object is inferred from the statements endorsed by the subject, based upon the consensual evaluation of the nature of the characteristics attributed to the object by the acceptance of these statements. Such scales measure only the positivity-negativity of the affective reaction.⁶²

Therefore, each of the scales, by focusing on the evaluative dimension of a set of responses, attempts to infer the attitude. Of course there are differences among the scales as to how this occurs. However, the fundamental point of importance still remains; that is, the operational school has in effect contributed a response-type conception of an attitude.

If one is to regard Thurstone as the pioneer in the field of attitude measurement,⁶³ then perhaps this development has been unintentional. Thurstone certainly had a multidimensional view of an attitude.⁶⁴ However, he also believed in measuring it one dimension at a time. Consequently he chose

opinions as the means of measuring attitudes.⁶⁵ By opinion, he meant the verbal expression of an attitude. Utilizing the psycho-physical scaling method, he developed a linear scale for attitude measurement based on the law of comparative judgment.⁶⁶ Therefore, he developed a unidimensional scale for attitude measurement utilizing the dimension of affect.

Likert⁶⁷ and Guttman,⁶⁸ although developing different types of scales, accepted this dimensional analysis of attitudes and the prepotence of the evaluative characteristic. Further, it should be noted that Guttman's stress on "cumulativity" implied that some items invoked more "attitude response" than others.

Conclusion. The measurement school has been responsible for a highly operational definition of attitudes. Attitude is merely a summarizing convenience, expressive of the particular measure utilized. It is therefore a response variable. This conclusion seems to provide a link with Doob's analysis, e.g., the logical extension of his theory is that one can only study response sets when one studies attitudes. However, he would not define these as attitudes, as does the measuring school. Orientations such as these have had their impact on later work by clearly sharpening the focus on measurement problems. Questions of measurement have thus become a concern for all attitude theorists.

Summary

This chapter has attempted to trace early formulations of attitude concepts by focusing on the conceptual contributions of particular schools of thought. The Gestalt school, by focusing attention on individual cognitive processes, has been the forerunner of the modern consistency theories. The learning-behavior school contributed a rigorous research orientation, and directed the focus toward objectively quantifiable variables. In general it has not proven to be a fruitful testing ground for the study of attitudes. A few subsequent developments have been based explicitly on learning theory principles, but most have followed the eclectic tradition of Hovland. Some integrative approaches are beginning to appear. The measuring school has made a very definite contribution to the solution of measurement problems, and with it has contributed an operational conceptualization of attitudes. Of more interest is the fact that it has stimulated general concern with measurement amongst all attitudes theorists. The discussion in Chapter II will continue the analysis of attitude-theoretical developments by examining particular approaches to the study of attitudes.

FOOTNOTES, CHAPTER I

¹W.I. Thomas and F. Znaniecki, The Polish Peasant in Europe and America (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1918), I, p. 27. Also of interest is their definition of an attitude. "By attitude we understand a process of individual consciousness which determines real or possible activity of the individual in the social world."

²William McDougall, An Introduction to Social Psychology (London: Methuen and Co., Ltd., 1908), pp. 121-208, devoted a good deal of attention to what he labeled "sentiments", and defined as follows: ". . . emotional dispositions . . . organized in systems about the various objects and classes of objects that excite them."

³Gordon W. Allport, "Attitudes", Handbook of Social Psychology, ed. Carl A. Murchison (New York: Russell and Russell, 1935), p. 798.

⁴It is interesting to note the paradox in this development. Kurt Lewin's work was largely responsible for stimulating much of this work in group dynamics. However, as will be indicated later, he also made an important contribution to the study of attitudes through his emphasis upon cognitive organisms and their systematic organization.

⁵William J. McGuire, "The Nature of Attitudes and Attitude Change", The Handbook of Social Psychology, ed. Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson (Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1969), III, p. 138. It is interesting to note that the popularity of public opinion polling and voting studies began to flourish in that period when concern with attitudes had declined in social psychology. Perhaps this is partly responsible for the attendant lack of rigorous treatment of attitudes in these early voting behavior studies. However, many writers have traced the importance of these studies in terms of their effect on stimulating concern with attitude study. For a fuller description of the impact of sample surveys and polling see, William Albigh, "Two Decades of Opinion Study: 1936-1956", Public Opinion Quarterly, 17 (1957), pp. 14-22. Of interest also is Serge Moscovici,

"Attitudes and Opinions", Annual Review of Psychology, 14 (1963), pp. 231-260, who also makes similar points concerning the impact of public opinion surveys--in particular, some of the early voting studies.

⁶Charles A. Kiesler, Barry E. Collins, and Norman Miller, Attitude Change: A Critical Analysis of Theoretical Approaches (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1969), p. 5.

⁷Allport, op. cit., p. 805.

⁸Ibid., p. 810.

⁹Solomon Asch, "Gestalt Theory", The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 1968, p. 159.

¹⁰Ibid.

¹¹Ibid.

¹²Ibid., pp. 159-160.

¹³Max Wertheimer, "Gestalt Theory", A Source Book of Gestalt Psychology, ed. W.D. Ellis (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., Ltd., 1938), p. 3.

¹⁴Asch, op. cit., p. 160.

¹⁵Morton Deutsch and Robert M. Kraus, Theories in Social Psychology (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1965), pp. 15-16.

¹⁶Asch, op. cit., p. 160.

¹⁷Deutsch and Krauss, op. cit., p. 16.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 16-17.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 17.

²⁰Thomas M. Ostrum, "The Emergence of Attitude Theory: 1930-1950", Psychological Foundations of Attitudes, ed. Anthony C. Greenwald, Timothy C. Brock, and Thomas M. Ostrum (New York: Academic Press, 1968), p. 12.

²¹For a discussion of this see in particular Kurt Lewin, "Defining the 'Field' at a Given Time", Field Theory in Social Science: Selected Theoretical Papers by Kurt Lewin, ed. Dorwin Cartwright (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1951), pp. 43-59.

²²Deutsch and Krauss, op. cit., p. 38. For a further discussion of the research stimulated by these dynamic concepts see the discussion pp. 38-62. To accent the tremendous impact of terms such as "tension", one has only to refer to the voluminous literature on cognitive consistency theories.

²³Cartwright, op. cit., p. 25.

²⁴Ibid., p. 27.

²⁵Deutsch and Krauss, op. cit., p. 28.

²⁶Ibid., pp. 24-25.

²⁷Solomon Asch, Social Psychology (New York: Prentice-Hall, 1952), p. 442, states: "Whether we consider historical movements or economic and political ideas, it remains a fact that an act gains its meaning and significance from its relation to the particular conditions of time, place, and circumstance."

²⁸Solomon E. Asch, Helen Block, and Max Hertzman, "Studies in the Principles of Judgements and Attitudes: I. Two Basic Principles of Judgement", Journal of Psychology, 5 (1938), p. 248.

²⁹Ibid., p. 251.

³⁰M. Sherif and H. Cantril, "The Psychology of Attitudes", Psychological Review, 52 (1945), pp. 295-319. M. Sherif and H. Cantril, "The Psychology of Attitudes", Psychological Review, 53 (1946), pp. 1-24.

³¹Ibid., p. 302.

³²Ibid.

³³Ibid., p. 303.

³⁴Theodore M. Newcomb, "Introduction", Theories of Cognitive Consistency: A Sourcebook, ed. Robert P. Abelson et al. (Chicago: Rand McNally and Company, 1968), p. xvi.

³⁵Deutsch and Krauss, op. cit., p. 29.

³⁶Fritz Heider, The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1958), p. 176.

³⁷Ibid., pp. 3-4, 296. Heider himself makes it rather explicit that he is not interested in developing a highly rigorous system. Thus, in many respects his theory becomes highly ambiguous and imprecise.

³⁸Ibid., p. 201.

³⁹Ibid., pp. 202-203.

⁴⁰Deutsch and Krauss, op. cit., p. 79.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 80.

⁴²Ibid., p. 101.

⁴³M. Brewster Smith, Social Psychology and Human Values (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1969), p. 86.

⁴⁴Barry E. Collins, "Behavior Theory", Abelson, op. cit., pp. 240-241.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶For example, see Newcomb, op. cit., p. xvii, who states: "There is a general direction in science, from the study of discrete elements to that of the relations among them." As well, see Shel Feldman, "Motivational Aspects of Attitudinal Elements and Their Place in Cognitive Interaction", Cognitive Consistency: Motivational Antecedents and Behavioral Consequences, ed. Shel Feldman (New York: Academic Press, 1966), pp. 75-83, who develops the analogy between the transition of interest from molar to atomic in quantitative chemistry, and the trends in attitude theory. In effect, both are establishing the point that cognitive approaches have focused on elements of the internal system whereas learning-behavior theory has focused on the external, observable features. This represents the fundamental difference between the two approaches.

⁴⁷Smith, op. cit., p. 86.

⁴⁸Leonard W. Doob, "The Behavior of Attitudes", Psychological Review, 54 (1947), pp. 135-156.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 136.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 136-137.

⁵¹Of particular relevance is Carl I. Hovland, Irving L. Janis, and Harold H. Kelley, Communication and Persuasion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953).

⁵²Ibid., p. 6.

⁵³Smith, op. cit., p. 87, notes: "No test of a specific learning theory is involved; rather the categories of learning theory serve heuristically to set the terms of the empirical problem and to suggest lines of interpretation that give direction to subsequent investigation."

⁵⁴Hovland, Janis, and Kelley, op. cit., pp. 6-9.

⁵⁵Ibid., p. 7.

⁵⁶Ibid., p. 12.

⁵⁷See for example Carl I. Hovland, et al., The Order of Presentation in Persuasion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957), in which research is presented on order effects within a communication. A particularly good summary of the research related to communication is available in Chester A. Insko, Theories of Attitude Change (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967), pp. 15-61.

⁵⁸Bert F. Green, "Attitude Measurement", Handbook of Social Psychology, ed. Gardner Lindzey (Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing Co., Inc., 1954), I, pp. 335-369.

⁵⁹Ibid., p. 336.

⁶⁰Ibid.

⁶¹Fred N. Kerlinger, Foundations of Behavioral Research (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965), p. 484.

⁶²Marvin E. Shaw and Jack M. Wright, Scales for the Measurement of Attitudes (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1967), p. 14.

⁶³L.L. Thurstone, "Attitudes Can Be Measured", American Journal of Sociology, 33 (1928), pp. 529-554. L.L. Thurstone, "The Measurement of Social Attitudes", Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 26 (1931), pp. 249-269.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 530.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 529-531.

⁶⁶For a particularly good discussion of the development of psychological scales from psycho-physical theory see J.P. Guilford, Psychometric Methods (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, Inc., 1954), pp. 20-42. For a discussion of Thurstone's method of paired comparisons as developed from psycho-physical theory and the law of comparative judgments, see Allen L. Edwards, Techniques of Attitude Scale Construction (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1957), pp. 19-52.

⁶⁷R. Likert, "A Technique for the Measurement of Attitudes", Archives of Psychology, 140 (1932).

⁶⁸L. Guttman, "A Basis for Scaling Qualitative Data", American Sociological Review, 9 (1944), pp. 139-150.

CHAPTER II

CONTEMPORARY ATTITUDE FORMULATIONS

This chapter is concerned with four main areas. First, the cognitive consistency school will be examined. Following from Heider's formulations a spate of contributions, variously labeled consistency, congruity, or balance theories, have developed. In particular, these theories have become specialized around certain topics, although still maintaining general consistency formulations. In many ways, this specialization represents explicit attempts at refining and improving on Heider's theory of cognitive balance. Therefore, much of the analysis will be devoted to making this point clear, since it is discussion such as this which lays clear attitude-theoretical controversies. Other areas to be discussed include judgmental processes theory, learning-behavior theory, and the "bridge-building" theory. This latter area includes some of the more eclectic theories which have utilized principles from many areas of psychology. As such, they hold the promise of bridging the gap between diverse theoretical formulations. As will be seen, in some ways the judgmental processes theory also fits into this category. The measuring school, as discussed in the preceding chapter, can no longer be identified as such--i.e. there does not seem to be

a purely operationalist school of attitudes now. The fifties and sixties have seen another change in orientation of attitude theorists. Although one can still identify offsprings of the Gestalt movement, as well as a learning theory group, all attitude theorists have become concerned with measurement, and with the integration of measurement concerns into their theories. As in the previous chapter, those theorists mentioned in the following analysis certainly do not exhaust each particular area of study. It is my feeling that they are representative of the major developments.

Cognitive Consistency Theories

Discussion in this section will be organized around four main areas: cognitive organization (Abelson and Rosenberg); cognitive congruity (Osgood et al. and Rokeach); cognitive dissonance (Festinger and his followers); and cognitive-interpersonal attraction balance approach (Newcomb and Cartwright and Harary).

Before proceeding, I would like to examine the concept of consistency. In general, consistency as utilized in this section refers to cognitive processes.¹ In this regard consistency formulations make a basic assumption about consistency. As McGuire states, they

. . . have in common the notion that the person tends to behave in ways that minimize the internal inconsistencies among his interpersonal relations, among his intrapersonal cognitions, or among his beliefs, feelings, and actions.²

The further implication of this assumption is that inconsistency is somehow intolerable, that it is psychologically uncomfortable, and thus the individual attempts to reduce, or minimize it.³

How then do cognitive consistency theories share in the Gestalt tradition? As previously mentioned, the Gestalt tradition brought the focus to the individual and his cognitive processes. Implicit in the consistency notions is a concept of system, of a dynamic interrelationship of parts. This was very much a Gestalt concern. Following the Gestalt tenet of "good organization", the concept of consistency appears to satisfy this principle. It is not only the feature of good organization, it is also a catalyst, and thus contributes to the dynamic features of the cognitive processes. These features will become evident in the following discussion.

Since many of these theories represent specialized attempts at improving on aspects of Heider's formulations, I would like to first of all note the general nature of the criticisms directed toward Heider.⁴ In general, this criticism could be subsumed under two related categories, ambiguity (central concepts and their relationships are not clear) and imprecision (no provision for degree of imbalance, intensity of the relations, etc.). Each of the following theorists are in some way concerned with clarifying aspects within these categories.

Cognitive Organization. Abelson and Rosenberg are concerned with penetrating beyond what they see as three limits to Heider's theory: (1) No systematic research program has been generated by his model; (2) his model is limited to interpersonal perception; and (3) the model is not extended beyond the P-O-X triad to parallel the complexities of structure found in real cognitive process.⁵

Briefly, Abelson and Rosenberg discard Heider's notion of a unit relation when they assume only one relation among cognitive elements (those things an individual thinks about), namely, an affective one. This relation can be positive, negative, or null (neutral or lack of a relation). They then assume that "the general tendency to reduce or redress cognitive imbalance applies not only to interpersonal cognitions but to attitudinal cognitions generally."⁶ Not only do they hypothesize a number of ways of reducing imbalance, they also postulate that the path toward balance which involves the least effort will be chosen. It would seem that an important element to be considered here is their notion of psychology which refers to a particular individual's pattern of thinking.⁷ Thus, an individual is seen as maintaining consistent relations among his cognitive elements in a manner which makes sense "psychologically". That is, not only does an individual tend to maintain consistent cognitive relations, he also "defines" what is consistent. Therefore, the path an individual chooses depends very much on his cognitive

organization.

Thus, Abelson and Rosenberg have addressed particular attention to the question of cognitive organization. Consequently, they have postulated a number of possible relations among cognitive elements, and imply a rather complex cognitive setup. In general, they feel that cognitive elements are related by laws of "psycho-logic". Balance is thus maintained. If imbalance occurs among the cognitive elements, the individual will follow a path of least effort in restoring balance. An attitude, as a cognitive element, is subject to the same "laws".

Cognitive Congruity. In this section, I will first examine Osgood and Tannenbaum's principle of congruity, and then discuss Rokeach's principle of belief congruence.

Osgood and Tannenbaum have stated the principles of belief congruence as follows: "changes in evaluation are always in the direction of increased congruity with the existing frame of reference."⁸ Frames of reference, or attitudes, tend toward maximum simplicity--i.e. they move toward maximum polarization, either positive or negative. A change of evaluation would result when two attitudes are associated via an assertion, which may be associative or dissociative. Differing with Heider, Osgood and Tannenbaum introduce the notion that congruity depends upon the degree of the liking relations (e.g. if P likes O--object--just a little bit, and

S--source--a great deal, incongruity exists). Further, they postulate that incongruity will result in P's attitude toward both S and O changing. Continuing, they note that the modification of attitudes depends also on their intensity or polarization--an inverse relationship is postulated. Finally, the concept of incredulity is introduced to account for the fact that incongruity does not always lead to change.

In their reformulation of the Heiderian kind of balance model, then, Osgood and Tannenbaum clearly develop the idea that the "liking relationship" must be expressed in terms of magnitude, not just direction. Consequently, this means that incongruity itself is a concept possessing the magnitude character. Moreover, they introduce the notion of maximum polarization as a mechanism for achieving the simplicity in frame of reference posited as a cognitive goal in this model. That is, maximum polarization refers to their belief that individuals tend to hold attitudes in as simple a fashion as possible. Finally, they have added the concept of incredulity to account for instances where incongruity does not produce change.

Rokeach has presented an interesting attempt at improving on Osgood and Tannenbaum's congruity theory.⁹ Consider the following principles of his belief congruence theory:

The principle of belief congruence asserts that we tend to value a given belief, subsystem, or system of belief in proportion to its degree of congruence with our own belief system and, further, that we tend to value people in proportion to the degree to which they exhibit beliefs, subsystems, or systems of belief congruent with our own. Congruence can be defined both in terms of similarity and importance. Given two beliefs or subsystems of belief equal in importance, the one more similar to our own is the more congruent; conversely, given two beliefs or subsystems perceived to be equally similar to our own, the one judged as more important is the one more congruent with our own belief system.¹⁰

Rokeach goes on to note that any stimulus will activate only a portion of one's belief system, with the general belief system serving as a frame of reference for judging direction and importance. Rokeach is interested, as are Osgood and Tannenbaum, in the association of stimuli by some assertion--associative or dissociative. (Rokeach postulates four forms for such assertions: linguistic qualification, perceptual contiguity, statements of classification, and source-object connections.)¹¹ Cognitive interaction is the process by which a single evaluative meaning emerges from combining two stimuli.

Rokeach sees the assertions as "unique configurations cognitively representing a characterized subject (CS) . . . having two components: a subject (S), and a characterization (C)."¹² Therefore, upon presentation of a CS a person will first ascertain if the two components are relevant, and then determine their importance. Rokeach postulates that the evaluation of the configuration of CS will be a simple average

of the evaluations of C and S considered separately.

These two theories are similar in many respects. Both present a notion of a "frame of reference" against which individuals evaluate incoming stimuli. Further, these frames of reference might be termed attitudes by both. Rokeach characterizes this point of view somewhat indirectly. For him the general belief system serves as the frame of reference. However, he defines attitude in the following fashion: "An attitude is a relatively enduring organization of beliefs around an object or situation predisposing one to respond in some preferential manner."¹³

Also, note that Rokeach has stated that only the relevant portion of the belief system will be activated. This leaves room for interactive situation effects, and is consistent with his view of attitude involving not only an object, but also the situation in which it occurs.

The main difference between the above two points of view relates to the evaluation of an object against the frame of reference. For Osgood and Tannenbaum, the associated objects are weighed according to their degree of polarization, and for Rokeach according to their judged relative importance.¹⁴

Osgood and Tannenbaum's notion of maximum simplicity is similar to Abelson and Rosenberg's notion of least effort--

i.e. they are derived from the Gestalt tenet of simple and coherent organization. Rokeach's notions of configurations, of situations, and of relationships are all derived from Gestalt psychology.

Cognitive Dissonance. Festinger shares with the above theorists the Gestalt emphasis that a person attempts to perceive, cognize or evaluate the various aspects of his environment and of himself in such a way that the behavioral implications of his perceptions shall not be contradictory.¹⁵ However, his theory adds features which are not subsumed under the consistency theories. Because of this, and because his theory has stimulated by far the most research in the field of attitude change, his theory deserves more attention.

Festinger initiates his discussion with two basic hypotheses:

1. The existence of dissonance, being psychologically uncomfortable, will motivate the person to try to reduce the dissonance and achieve consonance.
2. When dissonance is present, in addition to trying to reduce it, the person will actively avoid situations and information which would likely increase the dissonance.¹⁶

He then goes on to define some of his terms. Dissonance is "the existence of nonfitting relations among cognitions"; cognition is "any knowledge, opinion, or belief about the environment, about oneself, or about one's behavior"; and cognitive dissonance is seen as "an antecedent condition

which leads to activity oriented toward dissonance reduction."¹⁷

After briefly discussing the how and why of dissonance, Festinger then begins to develop his theory somewhat more specifically. At this point he becomes concerned with the relations existing between pairs of "elements". Elements are cognitions as defined above. These relations may be irrelevant (have nothing to do with one another) or relevant, and, in the latter case, they may be either dissonant or consonant. "These two elements are in a dissonant relation, if, considering these two alone, the obverse of one element would follow from the other."¹⁸ Or, X and Y are dissonant if not--X follows from Y. As examples of "follow from", Festinger considers dissonance arising from logical inconsistency, cultural mores, past experiences, etc. Concerning consonance he states: "If, considering a pair of elements, either one does follow from the other, then the relation between them is consonant."¹⁹

The notion of degrees of dissonance is then introduced. "If two elements are dissonant with one another, the magnitude of the dissonance will be a function of the importance of the elements."²⁰ Strength of the pressure to reduce dissonance thus becomes a function of the magnitude of the dissonance.

Festinger then discusses various possible ways of

reducing the dissonance by changing one of the elements. He notes that one might change a behavioral cognitive element, either physical or social. Further, one might add new cognitive elements which might provide support for one element, might decrease the importance of the existing dissonance, or might result in a reconciliation between elements.

Dissonance reduction is not always successful as there is resistance to dissonance reduction. The foremost source of resistance to change for any cognitive element is the responsiveness of such elements to reality. Certain circumstances--for example, when such change would be in some way painful, when present behavior may be otherwise satisfying, or when there is an impossibility of change--also make change difficult. Moreover, an element may be related to a number of other elements wherein the bolstering effect of their resistance may increase its resistance.

At this point Festinger presents another important postulate:

The maximum dissonance that can possibly exist between any two elements is equal to the total resistance to change of the less resistant element. The magnitude of dissonance cannot exceed this amount because, at this point of maximum possible dissonance, the less resistant element would change, thus eliminating the dissonance.²¹

Festinger concludes his discussion by noting that people not only tend to avoid increases in dissonance, but

they also tend to avoid dissonance per se.

At this point it is useful to contrast dissonance theory with the other consistency theories. There are a number of dimensions along which this can be accomplished.

First, and probably most important, is the notion of psychological implication. It is this concept that gives Festinger's theory much of its flexibility.²² For example, he is able to postulate that there are unbalanced situations that are not dissonant. Indeed, he seems to go even further than this by assuming that dissonance, as a motive state, may only apply to certain situations, and in many cases may well be less important than other motive states. For the inconsistency theories, a state of imbalance necessarily leads to change of some sort.²³

Second, by derivation from the notion of psychological implication, dissonance theory not only allows for varying magnitudes of dissonance to exist, it also specifies theoretical factors affecting the magnitude of the dissonance. The failure of the consistency theories to do the same has been one of the major criticisms directed against them.

Third, the theoretical methods of reducing dissonance diverge from those of reducing unbalance. Unbalance is typically reduced by changing a relationship or an evaluation. In dissonance theory, not only are the cognitive elements

differently resistant to change, but other modes of dissonance reduction such as the adding of cognitive elements, reconciliation, decreasing the importance of one of the elements, etc. are added.

Finally, dissonance theory utilizes different units of theorizing--cognitive elements--versus relationships as utilized by balance theories. The main result of this factor is that dissonance is always within the person, whereas in balance theories it is sometimes used to refer to interpersonal relations. This conclusion is particularly valid for the following discussion of Newcomb, Cartwright and Harary.

It is important to note that Brehm and Cohen, perhaps Festinger's principle followers, have tried to clarify and tighten the original dissonance theory arguments. To that end they have attempted to clarify the role of commitment and volition in the production of dissonance, and in the relation of dissonance and conflict.²⁴ As well, they have attempted to describe dissonance in motivational terms.²⁵

Cognitive-Interpersonal Attraction Balance Approach.

Newcomb's theory extends Heider's principle of balance from the private worlds of phenomenology to include also the objective world of interpersonal relations.²⁶ It is primarily a theory of interpersonal attraction²⁷ based on communication,²⁸ that has many similarities in structure and concept with

Heider's formulation.²⁹ The basic model (A-B-X instead of P-O-X) is maintained with attraction and attitude substituted for unit and sentiment relations. For Newcomb, attitude was a specific type of orientation, orientation being "that existing organization of the psychological processes of an organism which affects its subsequent behavior with regard to a discriminable object or classes of objects."³⁰ In this case, attitude is an orientation toward objects of communication and is said to have cathetic and cognitive aspects. The elements of the system of orientation are seen as being dynamically interdependent and as manifesting a strain toward balance.

Since they represent an attempt at refining the attitude concept, of particular importance are those variables Newcomb has added. These include "importance"--the degree of cathetic orientation--and "object relevance"--the degree of joint dependence of two or more communicators upon a specific object of communication, as judged by one of them. In other words, in attitude-relevant terms, they would pose the following questions. How important is the attitude object to the individual? How frequently is the object associated with the other individual?

In contrast to Newcomb's reformulation of Heider's theory, Cartwright and Harary have attempted to formalize it by utilizing the precepts of "digraph theory", and, at

the same time, to make it more general.³¹ In particular, they were concerned with the concept of "balance". They note that, as the notion formerly was defined, it applies to a rather limited range of situations, and contains certain ambiguities. Therefore, they attempt to define balance so as to overcome these limitations which are encompassed in the following statement:

Specifically, the definition should (a) encompass unsymmetric relations, (b) hold for units consisting of any finite number of entities, (c) preserve the distinction between the complement and the opposite of a relation, (d) apply to relations of different types, and (e) serve to characterize cognitive units, social systems, or any configuration where both a relation and its opposite must be specified.³²

As mentioned above, Cartwright and Harary make use of diagraph theory as their descriptive tool. Thus, with the aid of this theory, balance is defined in such a way that it can be quantified--i.e. the definition allows for degrees of balance. This is an important contribution. However, to this point, few empirical tests of this model have been forthcoming. As a result, Cartwright and Harary have only overcome the above limitations by definition.

Conclusion. Cognitive consistency theories have to this point become by far the most popular theories of attitude change. My discussion has made it quite obvious that all of these theories are in some manner indebted to the work of Fritz Heider. As Newcomb has stated:

In an important sense, history began with Heider's paper (1944) entitled "Social perception and phenomenal causality," soon followed by "Attitudes and cognitive organization" (1946). . . . Virtually all subsequent developments owe something to Heider and some of them very much indeed--particularly to his basic assumption that an imbalanced set of cognitions is associated with 'tension' and the arousal of forces which tend to restore or to attain states of balance.³³

Consequently, the Gestalt theme has permeated in many respects. Consistency, balance, congruity, or consonance are all similar descriptions of a "good" Gestalt--i.e. good configuration, order, or structure. Lewin's impact is also clearly visible--in particular, his focus on dynamic systems of relationships. Many of the additions to Heider's formulations have derived from Gestalt psychology. Included here are the notions of least effort, maximum simplicity, situation, elements of perception serving as an internal "ground" or frame of reference, and perception as it helps define psychological order, psychological importance, relevance, etc.

As mentioned in Chapter I, certain questions concerning consistency were immediately obvious by examination of the Gestalt principles upon which they were founded. How well have consistency theories answered these questions?

McGuire has provided a summary of general problems facing consistency theories. Of interest here is his discussion of definitional and empirical issues. His comments on the former set are summarized as follows.³⁴

- 1) Interpersonal versus intrapersonal units--not only is this a question of the level of the unit to be used, but also within each level it is a question of where the focus should be.
- 2) Negative relations--i.e. what constitutes a negative relation?
- 3) Types of relationships.
- 4) Quantification issues--these include problems in defining the pressure to change as a result of inconsistency, in defining the strength of the individual links in the structure, and the problem of using a multiplicative or an additive basis for determining the signs of cycles (e.g. do two minuses make a plus or another minus?).

His comments on empirical issues include the following.³⁵

- 1) Tolerance for inconsistency--are there individual differences and situational determinants?
- 2) Alternative modes of inconsistency reduction.
- 3) Purportedly necessary conditions for inconsistency arousal--i.e. such factors as awareness, choice, and commitment.
- 4) Origins of the need for inconsistency.
- 5) Temporal factors.

The above theories have dealt only with particular areas. Their degree of specialization, while responsible for important contributions, has led to neglect of many general theoretical problems. To remain popular, cognitive consistency theories will likely require theoretical integration in the future. To contribute to this end, present theorists within this school of thought will need to concern themselves with

those areas of joint concern among their various areas of specialized interests. Whether they accomplish this goal, or even go beyond it to integrate their ideas with more traditional areas of psychology, will hopefully be revealed in the next decade of research.

Judgmental Processes Theory

The judgmental theories represent an attempt to apply some of the principles of judgment, as developed in the study of psycho-physical phenomena, to the study of attitude change. There appear to be two main varieties of the judgmental processes approach: the assimilation-contrast theory, as developed by Sherif and Hovland,³⁶ and the adaptation-level theory, as developed by Helson.³⁷

Assimilation-Contrast Theory. Sherif and Hovland are "concerned with basic psychological processes underlying the expression of attitudes and their modifiability through communication."³⁸ Their focus is on the cognitive aspect, "on how the individual views the issue and the way his judgments are shaped by external and internal factors."³⁹ Thus, the Gestalt influence is very apparent. "Basic psychological processes" carries the gestalt implication that there are certain elements (for example certain aspects of perception) which are basic to all individuals. Therefore, what has attracted the attention of Sherif and Hovland are those basic aspects of judgmental processes about which one can

generalize. External factors imply that situation is very much a relevant concern. The internal factors are suggestive of Gestalt principles of cognitive organization. However, the emphasis is not entirely Gestaltist; aspects of learning theory (Hovland) are also introduced. Therefore, in some ways this work represents a "bridge-building" effort.

Laboratory experiments dealing with the judgment of physical items (psycho-physics) indicate that individuals form judgmental scales to deal with incoming stimuli. What sort of judgmental scales does an individual form to deal with incoming stimuli in social experience? In particular, how does he form them, and how will he use them in judging subsequent social stimuli? These are the basic questions with which Sherif and Hovland were concerned.

To apply judgmental principles to the social field requires the introduction of factors such as learning and motivation.⁴⁰ Learning factors contribute to the formation of a reference scale. In this context, it should be recalled that Sherif's earlier emphasis was upon social norms. Thus, he developed the notion of attitudes being rooted in social norms, and consequently serving as "anchors" against which incoming stimuli are evaluated. Motivational factors refer to the degree of acceptance or rejection of stimuli as judged against the reference scale. Reference, judgment, or psychological scales "serve as a basis for comparison and

appraisal of relevant stimulus items on subsequent encounters."⁴¹ The range of positions that include the individual's stand and those he will tolerate are termed his "latitude of acceptance", and those positions which are rejected are termed his "latitude of rejection."⁴² Implicit in this analysis is a particular notion of individual differences--i.e. not only does acceptability vary from individual to individual, it also varies qualitatively within the individual. This is similar to Festinger's notion that different individuals can tolerate differing degrees of dissonance.

The logical implication of the above is that an individual's reactions to a communication can be studied relative to his reference scale for judgment of the issue. Other factors are also added to these basic ideas. For example, the reference scale is regarded as being composed of categorizations of various positions. The end points, or anchors, representing the most extreme stands are seen as exerting greater influence as standards of judgment than are the other positions.⁴³ These anchors may be external as well as internal to the stimulus series or to the individual. Moreover, the placement of items--i.e. the type of stimulus arrangement--can also effect the position of the anchor.

Shifts in placement of stimuli within particular categories of the reference scale which are produced by an anchor effect (whether within or outside a series of stimuli),

are labeled in terms of the direction of the shift--either toward the anchor position (assimilation) or away from it (contrast).⁴⁴ In general, a contrast effect occurs when the discrepancy between the internal anchor and the series stimuli is large, and an assimilation effect occurs when the discrepancy is small.⁴⁵ Thus, stimuli that are closely similar to the anchor will be assimilated and will be seen as the same as the property assessed. Conversely, the greater the actual difference between a stimulus and an anchor, the more that difference will be psychologically accented and exaggerated through the "contrast-effect".

Attitudes, as anchors formed through social norms, are consequently regarded as being extremely resistant to change. Modification of the positioning of the anchor--involving only slight shifts--seems to subsume the typical change, if any. Moreover, it is not surprising that change is difficult to achieve. Since attitudes are regarded as being rooted in social norms, then attitude change would require also that social norms change. Obviously, this does not occur very easily.

Adaptation-Level Theory. Helson develops his adaptation-level theory from the analogy with the use of adaptation in biology. However, two central concepts in the biological usage, homeostasis and equilibrium, are subject to a somewhat different interpretation in psychological terms.⁴⁶ Helson recognizes

that individuals and groups do not always strive for states of equilibrium, but also strive for variety, change, novelty, etc. However, equilibrium is an important concept for Helson as,

. . . equilibrium states represent the reference points or zeros from which behavior is measured, predicted, and understood without implying that the goal of behavior is a state of equilibrium. The adaptation level represents the zero or origin to which gradients of stimulation are referable.⁴⁷

Adaptation is seen as a dynamic process, which provides for internal as well as external initiators of action. Thus, Helson posits that,

. . . the level of adaptation is the pooled effect of three classes of stimuli: (1) focal stimuli; (2) background or contextual stimuli; and (3) residual stimuli. The behavioral adaptation level is then defined as a weighted product of these three classes of stimuli:

$$A = X^p B^q R^r$$

or, in log form:

$$\log A = p \log X + Q \log B + r \log R$$

where A is the adaptation level; X is the geometric means of the focal stimuli; B is the background stimulus, . . . R is the residual stimulus; and p, q, and r are weighting coefficients denoting the relative contributions of the three classes of stimuli to level.⁴⁸

Therefore, adaptation level is a weighted geometric mean of all stimuli impinging upon the organism from without and all stimuli affecting behavior from within. Theoretically, then, stimuli may be weighted to take account of frequency and order of presentation, area, recency, duration, position in series, and other dimensions that affect level.⁴⁹

Stimuli further are viewed as being bipolar, with the adaptation level, or zero point, representing a zone of transition between these two dimensions.⁵⁰ This derives from Helson's belief that, ". . . all psychophysical scaling methods are fundamentally bipolar rating scales with the neutral or zero category supplied by the organism whether or not it is incorporated in the scale."⁵¹ Thus, the adaptation level serves as a reference scale according to which stimuli on the dimension are judged, and, as pointed out above, is dependent upon the interaction of focal, background, and residual stimuli.

How is this theory applied to the study of attitudes? Residual stimuli are classed as attitudes, beliefs, values, etc. Focal and background stimuli are more difficult to differentiate. In a given situation, focal stimuli represents the stimuli being judged, against a background of stimuli. Theoretically, with the interaction of focal and background stimuli accounted for, their effect on residual stimuli, such as attitudes, can be measured. However, the inability (or extreme difficulty) to account for the interaction of focal and background stimuli is a major stumbling block inhibiting research.

Conclusion. In both of the above theories judgmental processes are central. For Sherif and Hovland, judgment occurs against a reference scale, formed through experience,

and modified by situational factors. The end-points, or anchors (attitudes or external factors) contribute more to the evaluative process. In general, stimuli are assimilated or contrasted with these anchors. For Helson, stimuli are judged against one's adaptation level--a zone of transition between bipolar dimensions. As with Sherif and Hovland, background factors are very important. However, for Helson it appears that all stimuli have different adaptation levels. No provision is made for the interaction of these various levels. For Sherif and Hovland all stimuli (i.e. relevant to a particular anchor) can be placed along the same reference scale. Consequently, their theory can deal with more complex situations.

The judgmental processes theory, though not particularly popular, has made some important conceptual contributions to the theoretical study of attitudes. These include the notion of an attitude as an evaluative standard, the notion of situation as an evaluative standard, and the notion of an attitude being highly resistant to change (i.e. enduring). In addition, the possibility of individual differences occurring within their general categories has not been neglected.

Before closing this discussion, I would like to note that a recent development by Ostrum and Upshaw has utilized judgmental principles.⁵² Since their discussion has provided some specific formulas by which their ideas may be tested,

perhaps judgmental processes theory will begin to receive more attention in the future. In particular, the authors are interested in the correspondence between one's attitude self-rating (i.e. judgment of a stimulus) and the attitude content (i.e. properties of the stimulus). To establish this correspondence they develop a "perspective model". The anchors on the ends of one's rating scale are regarded as the perspective against which rating occurs. Therefore, "the individual's self-rating is determined by his attitudinal content evaluated in the context of his own perspective."⁵³ Change in content, self-rating, or perspective will result in change in one, or both, of the remaining quantities. These formulations by Ostrum and Upshaw represent an interesting application, and extension of, judgmental processes theory. As mentioned above, their development of specific formulas provides promise for future empirical testing. Therefore, the important attitude-theoretical contributions made by judgmental processes theory may gain credence through future empirical conformation.

The Learning-Behavior School

As previously mentioned, this school of thought has not proved to be a successful proving ground for attitude theory. There have been a few direct formulations, but little supportive research. It would seem that by far the greatest contribution of learning theory has been the appeal and usefulness of some of its basic concepts. Even further

theoretical integration with other approaches would seem plausible and probable in the future. As Smith notes:

Heat has dissipated from controversy as theorists socialized to feel at home with stimulus-response or with cognitive terminologies come to see their differences as more a matter of linguistic preference and conceptual strategy and less a question of truth versus falsity.⁵⁴

Thus, an earlier controversy of consistency versus reinforcement is no longer the issue it was. Insko, in summing up, states:

Taking a long look back over the theories presented . . . it is apparent that many of the theories are characterized by one or both of two emphases, the importance of reward, reinforcement, or need reduction and the importance of consistency. . . .

In view of the pervasiveness of these two principles it is not surprising that an attempt has been made to reduce one to the other in the interest of theoretical parsimony. Hovland and Rosenberg (1960) argue that the motivation to reduce inconsistency can be explained on the basis of reinforcement-produced learning. . . .

This is an interesting and possibly important point of view. It should be noted, however, that one conceivable could take the opposite approach and argue that reinforcement is a type of inconsistency reduction in which homeostatic imbalance is restored.⁵⁵

Sherif and Hovland,⁵⁶ Rosenberg and Hovland,⁵⁷ and McGuire⁵⁸ are characteristic of those approaches which have utilized learning-behavior concepts in their formulations. As seen above, Sherif and Hovland utilized learning and motivational concepts in their judgmental processes theory. As well, Rosenberg and Hovland, while utilizing traditional Gestalt concerns, examined the development of instrumental learning in the face of certain conditioning factors that

served as positive or aversive reinforcements. McGuire, in developing his inoculation theory of resistance to persuasion, has focused on two classical variables of learning theory, practise and motivation.

At this point I would like to consider some of the direct applications of learning-behavior theory principles to the study of attitudes. In particular, I would like to examine the work of Fishbein, Rhine, and Staats. Before doing so, I should preface my remarks by expanding on the problem for studying attitudes from the behavior theory approach. It will be recalled that Doob also developed a behavior theory of attitudes. However, his theoretical analysis reduced the study of attitudes to the study of behavior. Since attitude is an implicit response, it can only be inferred from behavior. Yet, since Doob did not regard attitude as the sole determinant of behavior (other attitudes, habits, etc. are also determinative depending on the situation), then any given response may be the product of a number of factors. Consequently, attitude cannot be inferred directly from behavior. Therefore, it would seem to make more sense to study responses in particular situations.

How have behavior theory people dealt with Doob's theoretical formulations? Fishbein has attempted to revise behavior theory for the study of attitudes⁵⁹ by developing a model of attitudinal acquisition based on Rhine's theory.⁶⁰

Fishbein postulates that attitudes are learned initially as part of the process of concept formation. Once learned, however, the individual learns many new things about that attitude--i.e. he forms a belief system of responses. Strength of belief depends upon the probability that the response is associated with the stimulus concept. Each response is also viewed as a stimuli which elicits a learned mediating evaluative response. Thus, there are two aspects to beliefs--strength and evaluation--and attitudes are functions of these. This leads Fishbein to posit attitude organization and change as processes of cognitive summation whereby:

$$A_o = \sum_{i=1}^N B_i a_i$$

where A_o = the attitude toward object o

B_i = the strength of belief i about o , that is, the "probability" or "improbability" that o is associated with some other concept x_i
 a_i = the evaluative aspect of B_i , that is, the evaluation of x_i

N = the number of beliefs about o , that is, the number of responses in the individual's habit-family-hierarchy⁶¹

Therefore, attitude, as a function of beliefs, has both evaluative and strength characteristics. Consequently, attitude is regarded as a mediating evaluative response.⁶² Thus, it is possible to use the semantic differential (more correctly the evaluative loading on the semantic differential) to measure attitudes. As a result, it makes sense to study attitudes, not just responses.

Staats has developed a rather similar view of attitude as an "emotional" response to a stimuli.⁶³ Basically he argues that the acquisition of attitudes occurs through the process of classical conditioning. Once learned, an attitude is subject to development in accord with basic learning theory principles such as generalization, higher-order conditioning, etc. As well, attitude is regarded as having a stimulus function--i.e. it can become a secondary reinforcer or punisher. As with Fishbein and Rhine, Staats utilizes the evaluative meaning dimension of the semantic differential to measure attitudes.

Conclusion. The learning-behavior school has not gained much popularity among attitude theorists. However, many of its basic concepts have been profitably utilized in other theories. Direct applications of learning-behavior principles have focused primarily on the question of attitude formation. In general, they have put forward a conceptualization of attitude as a mediating evaluative response. This notion is somewhat different from the cognitive consistency view of attitude as a predisposition. Attitude, as an evaluative response, mediates between overt stimuli and overt responses. It does not predispose one to action. However, Staats's notion of attitudes functioning as secondary reinforcers seems to imply that different attitudes will be associated with different levels of activity. In this fashion attitude approaches the predispositional concept.

The Bridge-Builders

The theorists discussed in this area have been labeled "bridge-builders" since they have utilized principles from various areas in psychology. The functionalists, in particular Katz, Smith, Bruner, and White, will be dealt with here. Other theorists, e.g. Sherif and Hovland, Hovland and Rosenberg, and McGuire, who could also be included in this section, have been mentioned above.

Following from Smith's original article,⁶⁴ Smith, Bruner, and White, with their in-depth opinion study, developed a functional "theory" of attitudes.⁶⁵ More correctly, this should be labeled a functional approach. As Smith states, "Such functional classifications must be regarded as devices of heuristic convenience, not as theories true or false."⁶⁶ As a heuristic device, the functional approach has utilized many aspects from different areas of psychology.⁶⁷ Before discussing the implications of this eclectic-ism, I would like to examine the functional nature of attitudes as specified by Smith, Bruner, and White and by Katz.

Smith, Bruner, and White have attempted to integrate attitude psychology with the functioning of the personality. In this endeavor they postulate three attitude functions. These include object appraisal--an attitude provides an aid for sizing up objects and events in the environment; social adjustment--attitudes function toward facilitating, disrupting,

or maintaining an individual's relations with other individuals; externalization--attitudes often function as a means of externally expressing inner conflicts and difficulties.

In Katz's formulation, attitudes are seen to have very similar functions to those outlined by Smith, Brunner, and White.⁶⁹ However, in his discussion of the functions of attitudes, Katz is more detailed and adds a fourth function. The four functions he describes are the adjustment function, the ego-defensive function, the value-expressive function, and the knowledge function. Roughly, the adjustment function corresponds to Smith, Bruner, and White's social adjustment function, the ego-defensive function to the externalization function, and the knowledge function to the object appraisal function. The value-expressive function serves the purpose of giving positive expression to one's central values and his concept of self.

Katz also has described three attitude components, the affective, the cognitive, and the behavioral.⁷⁰ From this discussion he has developed a notion of consistency among components and among attitudes.

The trend toward consistency exists in its strongest form within the confines of a single attitude; there it seeks to make the components of the attitude congruent with one another. Inconsistencies can exist between attitudes more readily than between the components of a single attitude.⁷¹

Examination of these functions, plus other elements

of the work of Katz, Smith, Bruner, and White reveals the many diverse notions which are integrated into their formulations. First of all, their basic orientation is derived from clinical psychology. That is, their style of analysis is based upon individual, in-depth analysis. They have also adopted notions of cognitive organization--for example, the dynamic, interrelation of psychic-parts--and interpersonal processes. Included is a predispositional view of attitudes.⁷² Attitudes are formed through learning experiences and operate in the interest of psychic economy, e.g. they serve functions for the personality. Personality theory is therefore relevant in their formulations. As a result, motivation is brought into the analysis. Consequently, knowledge of the motivational bases of attitudes is deemed essential in determining the conditions under which attitudes will change. However, since it is very difficult to determine the motivational bases of particular attitudes, research becomes very difficult. Consequently, this approach has not stimulated much supportive research. However, it would appear to provide a useful starting point for theorists who are interested in attempting to "bridge the gap" between diverse theoretical formulations.

Summary

This chapter has attempted to trace contemporary formulations which are of relevance to the study of attitudes. Many of the themes of the early Gestaltists and their

followers still pervade the attitude literature. In particular, Gestalt principles have been very important to the cognitive consistency theorists, to the judgmental processes theorists, and to the functionalists. A learning-behavior school of thought is still identifiable, though not popular. However, many of their principles have been integrated into various theoretical formulations.

The above discussion should have established the fact that attitude is an increasingly important concept in social psychology. Further, it is a very complex concept that has evoked a good deal of theoretical controversy. This controversy has centered around a number of topics--for example, attitude definitions, attitude distinctions, attitude components--that have not been altered much over the above time period. The above has pointed out the historical development of major attitude-theoretical developments and their underlying principles and facilitates the following discussion of the major areas of conceptual controversy surrounding the attitude concept.

FOOTNOTES, CHAPTER II

¹For a schematic outline and discussion of types of cognitive consistency see Jerome E. Singer, "Motivation for Consistency", Cognitive Consistency, ed. Shel Feldman (New York: Academic Press, 1966), pp. 48-52.

²William J. McGuire, "The Current Status of Cognitive Consistency Theories", Ibid., p. 1.

³At this point, I have explicitly avoided using the term motivation to refer to the striving for consistency. There seems to be some disagreement as to whether the "need for consistency" ought to be labeled a motive. Singer, op. cit., pp. 52-54, seems to accept consistency as a motive and makes an attempt to clarify this conception, since, as he points out, most theorists are rather vague on this point. McGuire, op. cit., pp. 33-35, laments the use of motivation, but seems to accept its inevitability. Albert Pepitone, "Some Conceptual and Empirical Problems Of Consistency", Feldman, op. cit., pp. 269-273, poses the question "Is consistency a need in itself, or can pressure toward consistency be reduced to a more basic need or needs?" Others have pointed out examples where an individual seems actually to prefer a certain amount of inconsistency. For example, Fritz Heider, The Psychology of Interpersonal Relations (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1958), pp. 180-181, states that "the tension produced by unbalanced situations often has a pleasing effect on our thinking and aesthetic feelings." Others such as Theodore M. Newcomb, "An Approach to the Study of Communicative Acts", Psychological Review, 60 (1953), p. 395, feel that consistency has been learned and rewarded, and thus has acquired secondary reward value.

⁴For a discussion of this criticism all of the following are relevant: Theodore M. Newcomb, "Interpersonal Balance", Theories of Cognitive Consistency: A Sourcebook, ed. Robert F. Abelson, et al. (Chicago: Rand McNally & Company, 1968), pp. 28-51; Nehemiah Jordon, "Cognitive Balance as an Aspect of Heider's Cognitive Psychology", Ibid., pp. 169-178; Robert B. Zajonc and Eugene Burnstein, "The Learning of Balanced and Unbalanced Social Structures", Journal of Personality, 33 (1965), pp. 153-163; Robert Zajonc, "The Concepts of Balance, Congruity, and Dissonance", Public Opinion Quarterly,

24 (1960), pp. 280-296; Albert Pepitone, "Problems of Consistency Models", Feldman, op. cit., pp. 263-267. Chester A. Insko, Theories of Attitude Change (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967), pp. 174-176; Charles A. Kiesler, Barry E. Collins, and Norman Miller, Attitude Change: A Critical Analysis of Theoretical Approaches (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1969), pp. 165-168.

⁵Robert P. Abelson and Milton J. Rosenberg, "An Analysis of Cognitive Balancing", Attitude Organization and Change, ed. Milton J. Rosenberg, et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), p. 116.

⁶Ibid., p. 121.

⁷Robert P. Abelson and Milton J. Rosenberg, "Symbolic Psycho-Logic: A Model of Attitudinal Acquisition", Behavioral Science, 3 (1958), p. 4.

⁸Charles E. Osgood and Percy H. Tannenbaum, "The Principle of Congruity in the Prediction of Attitude Change", Psychological Review, 62 (1955), p. 43.

⁹Milton Rokeach, Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Inc., Publishers, 1968), especially Chapter Four: "The Principle of Belief Congruence and the Congruity Principle".

¹⁰Ibid., p. 83.

¹¹Ibid., p. 84.

¹²Ibid.

¹³Ibid., p. 87.

¹⁴Insko, op. cit., p. 85.

¹⁵Morton Deutsch and Robert M. Krauss, Theories in Social Psychology (New York: Basic Books, Inc., 1965), p. 68.

¹⁶Leon Festinger, A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1957), p. 3.

¹⁷Ibid.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 13.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 15.

²⁰Ibid., p. 16.

²¹Ibid., p. 28.

²²Elliot Aronson, "Dissonance Theory: Progress and Problems", Abelson, et al., op. cit., p. 7, argues that simplicity and generality are both the greatest strength and the greatest weakness of the theory. On the one hand, simplicity and generality result in imprecision and ambiguity. However, on the other hand, Aronson argues, these elements of the theory have been responsible for the proliferation of research testing--i.e. dissonance theory produces many hypotheses that are unique to it. With respect to this latter point Zajonc, op. cit., p. 292, and Insko, op. cit., p. 282, have argued that much of the appeal of dissonance theory comes from its ability to generate nonobvious predictions. However, Aronson would simply argue that predictions are nonobvious until one adequately understands the theory. A similar line of criticism has also been directed toward the generality of dissonance theory. It seems that many would argue that dissonance theory is like Freudian psychology--it can be interpreted in any required way and is therefore incapable of disproof. An example of this would be Aronson's discussion of Zajonc's example of people liking the dissonance created by a magician. Aronson simply argues that the theory is not properly understood--i.e. people expect to be fooled by a magician and being fooled is therefore consonant with their expectations. However, Aronson also goes on to state that determination of dissonance is often largely intuitive. This statement dramatically illustrates the imprecision of the theory in its specification of dissonance.

²³Kiesler, et al., op. cit., p. 231.

²⁴Insko, op. cit., pp. 204-206.

²⁵J.W. Brehm and Arthur R. Cohen, Explorations in Cognitive Dissonance (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1962), pp. 223-230.

²⁶Theodore M. Newcomb, "An Approach to the Study of Communicative Acts", Psychological Review, 60 (1953), pp. 393-404. Newcomb has always been interested in the interpersonal

context, and in particular in reference groups. Thus, his famous Bennington study identified an important social determinant of attitude change. See Theodore M. Newcomb, "Attitude Development as a Function of Reference Groups: The Bennington Study", Readings in Social Psychology, ed. Eleanor E. Maccoby, et al. (New York: Henry Holt & Company, 1958), third edition, pp. 265-275. An explicit statement of Newcomb's theory of interpersonal attraction is found in Theodore M. Newcomb, "Individual Systems of Orientation", Psychology: A Study of a Science, ed. S. Koch (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1959), III, pp. 384-422. Newcomb also provides support for his theory with his report of a longitudinal study in Theodore M. Newcomb, "The Prediction of Interpersonal Attraction", American Psychologist, 11 (1956), pp. 575-586.

²⁷Ibid. (1959), p. 387. "In an immediate sense this paper attempts little more than a systematic formulation of the processes by which human beings develop attitudes toward other persons and toward objects of joint relevance to themselves and to those persons."

²⁸Newcomb (1953), op. cit., p. 393. ". . . (C)ommunication among humans performs the essential function of enabling two or more individuals to maintain simultaneous orientation toward one another as communicators and toward objects of communication."

²⁹Theodore M. Newcomb, "Interpersonal Balance", Abelson, et al., op. cit., p. 31. ". . . (M)y assumptions and my questions are closely parallel to his (Heider)--and often borrowed from him."

³⁰Newcomb (1959), op. cit., p. 389.

³¹Dorwin Cartwright and Frank Harary, "Structural Balance: A Generalization of Heider's Theory", Psychological Review, 63 (1956), pp. 277-293. In particular they state: "The purpose of this paper is to present and develop the consequences of a formal definition of balance which is consistent with Heider's conception and which may be employed in a more general treatment of empirical configurations."

³²Ibid., p. 279.

³³Theodore M. Newcomb, "Introduction", Abelson, et al., op. cit., p. xvi.

³⁴McGuire, op. cit., pp. 20-26.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 26-33.

³⁶Muzafer Sherif and Carl I. Hovland, Social Judgment (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1961).

³⁷Harry Helson, Adaptation-Level Theory (New York: Harper and Row, Publishers, 1964).

³⁸Sherif and Hovland, op. cit., p. 1.

³⁹Ibid., p. 4.

⁴⁰Ibid., pp. 8-11.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 13.

⁴²Ibid., pp. 13-14.

⁴³Ibid., pp. 28-30.

⁴⁴Ibid., pp. 38-47.

⁴⁵Ibid., p. 70.

⁴⁶Helson, op. cit., pp. 48-50.

⁴⁷Ibid., pp. 49-50.

⁴⁸Ibid., p. 58.

⁴⁹Ibid., p. 59.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 65-73.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 73.

⁵²Thomas M. Ostrum and Harry S. Upshaw, "Psychological Perspective and Attitude Change", Psychological Foundations of Attitudes, ed. Anthony C. Greenwald, Timothy C. Brock, and Thomas M. Ostrum (New York: Academic Press, 1968), pp. 217-242.

⁵³Ibid., p. 221.

⁵⁴M. Brewster Smith, Social Psychology and Human Values (Chicago: Aldine Publishing Company, 1969), p. 87.

⁵⁵Insko, op. cit., p. 347.

⁵⁶Sherif and Hovland, op. cit.

⁵⁷Milton J. Rosenberg and Carl I. Hovland, "Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Components of Attitudes", Rosenberg, et al., op. cit., pp. 1-14.

⁵⁸Insko, op. cit., pp. 296-329.

⁵⁹Martin Fishbein, "A Behavior Theory Approach to the Relations Between Beliefs about an Object and the Attitude Toward the Object", Readings in Attitude Theory and Measurement, ed. Martin Fishbein (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967), pp. 389-400.

⁶⁰Ramon J. Rhine, "A Concept-Formation Approach to Attitude Acquisition", Ibid., pp. 382-388.

⁶¹Fishbein, op. cit., p. 394.

⁶²Ibid., p. 389, and Rhine, op. cit., p. 383.

⁶³Arthur W. Staats, "An Outline of an Integrated Learnings Theory of Attitude Formation and Function", Fishbein, op. cit., p. 373.

⁶⁴M. Brewster Smith, "The Personal Setting of Public Opinions: A Study of Attitudes Toward Russia", Public Opinion Quarterly, 11 (1947), pp. 507-523. It should be noted that Smith viewed attitudes as specific extensions of one's personal values--thus, the relationship between personality and attitudes. For a fuller discussion of this point of view see, M. Brewster Smith, "Personal Values as Determinants of a Political Attitude", Journal of Psychology, 28 (1949), pp. 477-486.

⁶⁵M. Brewster Smith, Jerome S. Bruner, and Robert W. White, Opinions and Personality (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1956).

⁶⁶Smith (1969), op. cit., p. 95.

⁶⁷Smith, Bruner, and White, op. cit., p. 28.

⁶⁸Ibid., pp. 39-46.

⁶⁹Daniel Katz, "A Preliminary Statement to a Theory of Attitude Structure and Change", Psychology: A Study of a Science, ed. S. Koch (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company Inc., 1959), III, pp. 423-475. Daniel Katz, "The Functional Approach to the Study of Attitudes", Public Opinion Quarterly, 24 (1960), pp. 163-177.

⁷⁰Katz (1959), op. cit., pp. 428-432.

⁷¹Ibid., p. 444.

⁷²Ibid., p. 428. "An attitude can be defined as an individual's tendency or predisposition to evaluate an object or the symbol of that object in a certain way." Smith, Bruner, and White, op. cit., p. 7. ". . . (W)e consider attitude to be a predisposition to experience, to be motivated with respect to and to respond to a class of objects in a certain way."

CHAPTER III

MAJOR CONCEPTUAL PROBLEMS

This chapter will discuss conceptual problems in three areas. First, the analysis will focus on issues of conceptual consequence that have arisen out of attempts at definition. This section, as previously indicated, will utilize the five aspects of Allport's attitude definition as a means of accomplishing this goal.¹ The second section will look briefly at another definitional area, that of making distinctions with other concepts. The third area concerns conceptual issues arising out of discussion of the components of attitudes. Particular attention will be devoted to an analysis of the relationship between attitudes and behavior.

Attitude Definitions

As previously indicated, Allport's definition is composed of five aspects: (1) it is a mental and neural state (2) of readiness (3) organized (4) through experience (5) exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response.

The notion of attitude as a mental and neural state not only implies phenomenological and physiological aspects, it is also indicative of the view that attitude somehow intervenes between antecedent conditions and consequent

behaviors. Physiological indicators such as the galvanic skin response have received some attention as indices of attitude. However, at best they deal only with one component of an attitude, the affective, and as such serve only as a measure of intensity, not of direction. Generally speaking attitudes have been regarded as intervening variables of some sort. This varies from those who would attribute strong motivational status to an attitude,² to those who regard it more as an implicit response.³ This latter conceptualization carries over into the second aspect of the above definition, readiness to respond. The debate focuses on whether attitude could best be defined as a response or a readiness to respond. The measuring school discussed in the previous two chapters generally would prefer the more operational position--attitude defined as a response. However, among the other theorists several gradations of positions are available. McGuire has outlined five such possibilities.⁴ The first of these, labeled the positivistic-approach, corresponds to a direct operational definition in terms of response. That is, this approach prefers to define directly the relationships between the antecedents and the consequents. Therefore, it is characteristic of those who have been strongly influenced by traditional behavior theory. McGuire terms the second conceptual strategy as the paradigmatic-approach. This approach attempts to define one antecedent and one response as being so central and fundamental that any other antecedent variable,

as it is related to any other consequent, can be defined as approximating the two paradigmatic variables. The third approach, termed mediationalist, is probably the most popular. As the name implies, attitude is viewed as a mediating construct, tied into socially observable reality at both ends in terms of antecedent conditions that lead to it, and the consequents that follow from it. The fourth approach, which is termed class-inclusionist, requires a greater elaboration of intervening variables, as the presence of mediating constructs on both the antecedent and consequent sides are posited. This type of approach would be characteristic of Doob, whose attitude definition was discussed in Chapter I. Here, attitude is regarded as a compound mediating process where antecedents or overt stimuli produced a covert response as well as a covert stimulus feedback that evokes consequent responses.⁵ The fifth, and final, approach outlined by McGuire is the interactionist school. This school adds complexity to the mediational approach to take into account a possible additional complication in the real world, namely, interactions among the antecedents or among the consequents. This conceptualization would recognize that the mediating attitude is determined, not only by the level of antecedent stimuli, but by the effects involving interactions among them.

It may be seen, therefore, that there are many possible ways of conceptualizing attitude as a state of readiness.

These vary from the strict operational definition of attitude as a response (positivistic), to the complex view of an attitude as a mediating construct interacting with stimuli and possible behavior patterns (interactionist). In terms of the previous discussions in Chapters I and II, it would appear that the measuring school largely falls into the realm of the positivistic and paradigmatic approaches. The learning theorists tend to fall into the class-inclusionist approach, and to some extent into the mediationalistic approach. The Gestalt school is also subject to variation. Many appear to fall into the mediationalist classification, while others, such as Rokeach, who focus on contextual characteristics, are certainly within the interactionist category. The functionalists would also subscribe to this latter category, although their focus on interaction effects would differ from the Gestaltists. That is, whereas the Gestaltists might stress the importance of antecedents such as the immediate situation, the functionalists would stress the importance of prior antecedents related to personality formation. This is not surprising, since their theories are primarily related to the question of attitude formation.

The third aspect of Allport's attitude definition, namely, that attitudes are organized, raises two questions. Does the attitude per se have a characteristic structure--i.e. what, if any, are the components of an attitude? Secondly, is there a characteristic structure within attitude

systems? In other words, the conceptual issues of consequence focus on the organizational properties of attitudes. This parallels closely the view that attitudes are very complex (e.g. components and organization), since the stimuli which give rise to the attitudes are seen as complex objects. Discussion of these issues will be reserved for the later section dealing with attitude components.

The fourth aspect of the definition relates to experience, and appears to be the one aspect on which most theorists are in general agreement. Theorists seem to agree that attitudes, whatever else they may be, are learned. Further, general agreement would likely be reached that the acquisition of attitudes occurs through conscious and unconscious learning processes. Such a conclusion does not preclude controversy on the manner in which this occurs. However, questions such as these are certainly beyond the scope of this paper.

The directive or dynamic aspect of an attitude provides another area of conceptual controversy. Attitudes, as directive forces, serve only to channel the response in a particular direction. Attitudes, as dynamic forces, not only determine the channel of expression, but also the level of activity associated with it. This view seems to correspond more closely to the conceptualization of attitudes as motives--i.e. they produce, energize, and direct behavior.⁶ At any rate, most theorists would agree that attitudes have directive properties. However, if direction implies the selection

among a set of alternatives, then another conceptual issue is raised. Does this refer to selection on the reception side (perceptual selection), or on the response side (behavioral selectivity), or on both? This conceptual issue points out a fundamental area of divergence between the Gestalt school and the learning-behavior school. For the Gestaltists, with their focus on perception, attitude change would involve making a new response to an old stimulus as well as redefining this stimulus. That is, perception of the stimulus to which the response is being made must change. This change could occur merely as the result of an individual rethinking his position. For the learning-behavior school, attitude change involves a change in the evaluative response of the old stimulus as a result of new information, e.g., their focus is more response-oriented. It would therefore appear that attitude change, as conceived by the Gestaltists, is very difficult to achieve since it involves a change in perceptual evaluation, as well as a change in response.

It is obvious, therefore, that there are many points at which attitude definitions diverge and differ. Some attitude conceptions include only some of the five aspects discussed above, or would include all, but focus their discussion on particular aspects as the characteristically defining ones.⁷ In general, however, the themes expressed by Allport's definition seem to be either implicit or explicit in most attitude definitions. It is within these themes that issues

of conceptual importance arise. A further interesting definitional controversy relates to distinctions among concepts, e.g., how do attitudes differ, if at all, from opinions, beliefs, and values?

Attitude Distinctions

Attempts at distinguishing between attitudes and other related concepts, although often appearing to produce a semantic jungle, really ought to be useful as a means of clarifying the attitude concept. The following discussion will examine some of the efforts which have been made to distinguish attitudes from opinions, beliefs, and values.

Attitudes and Opinions. The choice of attitudes and opinions as the first area of discussion is not an accidental one--more attention has been directed to distinguishing between these two concepts than any of the others. The range of distinctions include opinions as being the more observable entity and opinions as being particular types of beliefs. (This range of distinctions is by no means mutually exclusive. Some writers would likely make distinctions along both these variations.) Some writers even feel that no meaningful distinction can be made and thus equate the two concepts.⁸

In a number of cases opinions are typically differentiated from attitudes on the basis that attitudes are more general orientations. Thus, opinion is seen as the specific manifestation, i.e. overt expression, of the broader attitude.⁹

However, most would make the distinction that opinions as observable entities or verbal expressions may not be indicative of one's true opinion since the situation may produce distortion, lying, etc. This approach tends to become tautological unless one can adequately control and present situations in which one could reasonably expect that the opinions, as expressed, are relatively undistorted.¹⁰ At best, this appears to be a difficult distinction to make.

Attitudes are also distinguished from opinions on the basis that opinions represent particular types of beliefs. McGuire has indicated that opinions are beliefs dealing with one's expectations or predictions about events, while attitudes are beliefs dealing with one's wishes, hopes, or desires about events.¹¹ This represents the view that opinions and attitudes differ as they deal with informational and normative material respectively, e.g., one could have an opinion about which political party was in office, and an attitude about the merits of that party. As is obvious upon closer examination of this example, the distinction is far from being clear-cut. This type of attempt at distinction is close to the above discussion of whether attitudes have dynamic as well as directive qualities. Opinion would therefore be a belief without dynamic qualities. Another related attempt at distinguishing opinions and attitudes deals with the view that opinions represent dimensions other than the evaluative ones represented by attitudes. Attitudethus must be defined according to the evaluative dimension.¹²

This latter area of distinctions hinges upon a consideration of beliefs. What distinctions are made between attitudes and beliefs?

Attitudes and Beliefs. Again it should be noted that not all theorists would wish to distinguish among concepts such as attitudes, opinions, beliefs, and values. This is also true for the discussion of components of attitudes. For example, beliefs or cognitions are conceived as being part of the attitude concept. Others, such as Fishbein, believe that it is useful to make a distinction.¹³ Fishbein makes the distinction in the following fashion:

Attitudes are learned predispositions to respond to an object or class of objects in a favorable or unfavorable way. Beliefs, on the other hand, are hypotheses concerning the nature of these objects and the types of actions that should be taken with respect to them.¹⁴

Fishbein goes on to discuss beliefs in terms of probability-improbability.¹⁵ Beliefs also have an evaluative component which Fishbein conceptualizes in terms of their probability or improbability of occurrence.

Rokeach makes a different distinction.

. . . (A)n attitude is defined simply as an organization of interrelated beliefs around a common object, with certain aspects of the object being at the focus of attention for some persons, and other aspects for other persons. The attitude has cognitive and affective properties by virtue of the fact that the several beliefs comprising it have cognitive and affective properties that interact and reinforce one another.¹⁶

Attitude and Value. In general, two classifications of distinctions are utilized to distinguish between attitudes and values. The first of these relates to defining value as a broader attitude and the second defines value as a component of an attitude.

Smith is indicative of this first classification.¹⁷ In particular, he regards values as general attitudes influencing more specific ones. Values would then include such orientations as economics, security, home and family life, liberty, and health. One simply develops attitudes which engage these values.

The second conception tends to regard values as components of attitudes. One's attitude is simply composed of evaluations of the values or goals toward which it is directed.¹⁸

Conclusion. There has been a good deal of effort directed toward distinguishing related concepts from attitudes as a means of clarifying the attitude concept. From the above discussion it is apparent that there are several alternate ways of making distinctions for each concept involved. However, there appears to be general agreement that the above concepts, in one fashion or another, are intimately related. Hence, much theoretical analysis has focused on describing the systemic nature of these concepts. Consequently this leads to a discussion of attitude components.

Attitude Components

This discussion will focus primarily on the components of attitudes and the relationships among them. A related question concerns the structure of attitude systems and their interrelationships.

The analysis of the components of attitudes seem to fall into two categories, the tripartite affective-cognitive-conative structure¹⁹ and the means-ends structure. Considering the latter of these first, it seems applicable to the functional school of thought, e.g., attitudes have a perceived instrumentality or function for personality. They are goal-directed.²⁰ The work of Abelson and Rosenberg²¹ and Fishbein²² is more relevant to this discussion as the structure of their attitude systems bears directly on the means-ends organization. Abelson and Rosenberg developed a theory that the elements of cognition (e.g. actors, means, ends) are connected by four types of relations: positive, negative, null, and ambivalent. These relations were considered to be governed by the laws of psycho-logic. The structure of cognitive relationships is primarily a means-ends structure. A notion advanced by Fishbein provides a different point of view entirely. His analysis is based on learning theory principles. An individual learns an attitude initially through the process of classical conditioning. Once it is learned, however, the individual learns new things about it, that is, he associates many different objects, concepts, values, or goals with the attitude

object.²³ A stimuli evoking an attitude (an implicit response) really activates a structure of means-ends relationships. In general, this type of cognitive structuring is almost endemic to the learning-behavior school of thought. Attitudes per se would be related according to their perceived instrumentality to each other--i.e. to the extent that one attitude becomes the other's object and thus has reward value.

The second conceptualization of the structure of attitudes posits a cognitive-affective-conative trichotomy. The cognitive component is generally utilized to refer to the way in which the attitude object is perceived. Affect generally refers to the individual's feelings of liking or disliking (evaluation) about the object of the attitude. The conative or behavioral component refers to the individual's behavioral tendencies regarding the object. In general, the discussion of these components follows the Gestalt tenets of organization--a dynamic, interrelationship of parts. According to the consistency theorists, this interrelationship is predicated upon consistency. As is evident from Chapter II, much of the stress is placed upon the cognitive or perceptual component. Consistency is very much an individual phenomenon--i.e. what is of importance is how the individual puts his cognitive elements together. Consequently, psychological variables such as importance, salience, relevance, centrality, proximity, magnitude of dissonance, polarity, etc. become extremely important (and a source of controversy). The individual is

assumed to follow "consistency" principles in, and among, his attitudes. However, it would appear that what is consistent for one may be inconsistent for another. This is further complicated by notions that often certain amounts of inconsistency can be tolerated (which again points to the question of individual differences as accented by the functional theorists). Nevertheless, though there is still much theoretical controversy in this area, a good deal of consensus is also found regarding the affective and cognitive components. In general, there is much evidence available indicating a high degree of correlation between these two components.

The relationship with the conative or behavioral component has received the least attention and is the subject of the most controversy. For these reasons, plus the fact that the genesis of the attitude concept was related to the explanation of behavior, this area will receive a detailed discussion.²⁴

The following statement by Insko is particularly relevant to this discussion.

From the present vantage point the most glaring weakness of contemporary theorizing is the lack of emphasis upon the relation between attitudes and behavior. The theories seem to have concentrated on the relation between attitudes (affection) and opinions (cognitions) and have almost completely neglected behavior (conation).²⁵

Before proceeding, an examination of the controversy surrounding the attitude-behavioral dilemma seems in order.

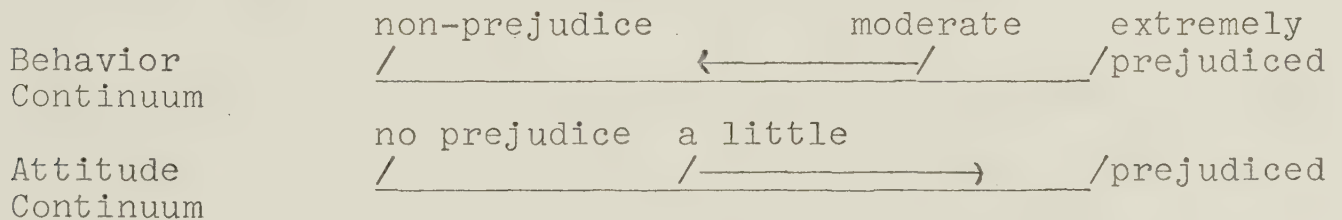
Perhaps the most discussed article concerning attitudes and behavior is LaPiere's famous 1934 article in which he described the actions of motel or restaurant proprietors who actually served a Chinese couple even though they said they would not do so when asked by letter.²⁶ This conclusion points to an apparent inconsistency between attitudes and behavior. On the other hand, studies such as the one by Nettler and Golding have found consistency between attitudes and behavior.²⁷ From their attitude scales they were able to discriminate between members of avidly pro-Japanese, and members of avidly anti-Japanese organizations.

Kiesler, Collins, and Miller have offered a particularly good discussion of the difficulties surrounding the problem of establishing a relationship between attitudes and behavior.²⁸ In general, they focus their discussion on the fact that "situational differences, norms, and expectations can vary while the attitude remains constant."²⁹ In particular, they focus on five factors.

First, they pose the question of reliability. By this, they simply wish to raise the question of the reliability of the measuring technique. Any imprecision would lower the correlation.

The second factor considered is termed item difficulty. In general, this refers to the failure of two measurements of attitudes and behavior to correlate since they may make

discriminations at different extremes of the attitude or behavioral continuum. An example of this would be a behavior test which discriminates between the extremely prejudiced and the moderately prejudiced. If this is the means of differentiating (note this applies only to dichotomous variables) then everyone from moderate prejudice on down is classified as non-prejudiced. Suppose then that the attitude item discriminates between no prejudice and just a bit of prejudice. Then all those from this latter category on up are prejudiced. Therefore, a situation like the following exists.



As a result, many people classified not prejudiced by the behavior item must be classified prejudiced by the attitude item. This, of course, does not mean that attitudes and behavior are not correlated. It does point out rather strongly the need to develop comparable attitude and behavior measures.

Another factor discussed is termed category width. Here Kiesler and his associates develop the idea that attitude continuums are often finely discriminated whereas the behavior continuum is broken into only a few large categories. This clearly points out the fact that behavior has not received the same rigorous conceptual treatment as have attitudes. Perhaps this helps explain the difficulty theorists have had

in relating attitudes to relevant behavior.

Another reason developed for the lack of correlation between attitudes and behavior relates to the attitude object. Are the attitudes and behavior in question related to the same object? For example, an attitude test might measure generalized feelings about Negroes, whereas the behavioral indicator might be dealing with a specific Negro, in a specific situation. Introducing situation variables adds further complexity. What interactive effects are there? Does the situation give added meaning to the behavior?

Related to this latter notion is the question of the components of an attitude, e.g., are there such things as attitude clusters, and to what extent are attitudes differentiated? If one has two or more attitudes toward the same object, then the behavior would vary according to which attitude was aroused. For example, one might have a "liberal" attitude toward Negroes as a disadvantaged group and an "economic" attitude toward Negroes in the neighbourhood. The behavioral measure would thus depend on which attitude was tapped.

In general, the above is indicative of major problems in the area of attitude and behavior measures. Insko's previous statement to the effect that the study of behavior has been neglected is clearly relevant. Much of the apparent discrepancy or lack of correlation between attitudes and

behavior can be blamed on the failure to treat behavior systematically. As Fishbein states, "We have not subjected our behavioral criteria to the same rigorous analysis to which we subject our paper--and pencil--tests."³⁰ The problem thus seems to be largely a methodological one, at least to this point.

Conclusion. This chapter has focused on issues of conceptual consequence arising from discussions of attitude definitions, attitude distinctions, and attitude components. Although much disagreement is apparent, this disagreement rests primarily on particular points related to attitudes. The nature of the disagreement is not destructive--it is not a controversy concerning the utility of the attitude concept. Rather, the general importance of the attitude concept is accepted as a general conception of what an attitude is. The discussion merely identifies many important aspects of the attitude concept, of which any attitude-type analysis must be cognizant. This leads to the second part of this thesis, namely, a consideration of the attitude concept as it has been utilized in studies of American voting behavior.

FOOTNOTES, CHAPTER III

¹This method of analysis is adopted from William J. McGuire, "The Nature of Attitudes and Attitude Change", The Handbook of Social Psychology, ed. Gardner Lindzey and Elliot Aronson (Reading: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1969), III, pp. 142-149.

²For example, any definition which describes attitude as a predisposition falls into this category. As an example of this, M. Brewster Smith, Jerome S. Bruner, and Robert W. White, Opinions and Personality (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1956), p. 7, ". . . we consider attitude to be a predisposition to experience, to be motivated with respect to and to respond to a class of objects in a certain way."

³Most learning-behavior approaches fall into this category. As an example of this Martin Fishbein, "A Behavior Theory Approach to the Relations between Beliefs about an Object and the Attitude toward the Object", Readings in Attitude Theory and Measurement, ed. Martin Fishbein (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967), p. 389, ". . . an attitude may be characterized as a . . . learned implicit response. . . ."

⁴McGuire, op. cit., pp. 144-147.

⁵Leonard W. Doob, "The Behavior of Attitudes", Psychological Review, 54 (1947), pp. 135-136.

⁶Ibid., p. 144, "An attitude is an implicit response . . . which is in itself cue- and drive-producing. . . ." This is similar to Smith, et al., op. cit., p. 7, ". . . we consider an attitude to be a predisposition to experience, to be motivated. . . ."

⁷Milton J. Rosenberg and Carl I. Hovland, "Cognitive, Affective, and Behavioral Components of Attitudes", Attitude Organization and Change, ed. Milton J. Rosenberg, et al. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1960), p. 3, indicate that attitudes are predispositions to respond, and focus on what they consider as three major types of response-cognitive, affective, and behavioral. In a similar manner, but with a different focus Charles E. Osgood and Percy H. Tannenbaum,

"The Principle of Congruity in the Prediction of Attitude Change", Psychological Review, 62 (1955), p. 42, focus on the evaluative dimension of an attitude.

⁸Smith, et al., op. cit., p. 33, states: "We shall not be fussy about the word used to denote the phenomenon described in our definition. Attitude, opinion, sentiment--all of these terms refer to the kind of predisposition we have in mind." However, this is a rather atypical point of view as most theorists attempt to differentiate between these concepts.

⁹The following are typical of this approach: Alfred R. Lindesmith and Anselm L. Strauss, Social Psychology (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966), p. 494, ". . . a distinction came to be made between attitudes and opinions, the latter being taken to mean verbal reports from which attitudes can be inferred"; Milton Rokeach, Beliefs, Attitudes, and Values (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc., Publishers, 1968), p. 125, "An opinion is here defined as a verbal expression of some belief, attitude, or value"; and Carl I. Hovland, Irving L. Janis, and Harold H. Kelley, Communication and Persuasion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1953), p. 7, "Opinions are considered to be verbalizable, while attitudes are sometimes 'unconscious'. . . ."

¹⁰Ibid., p. 8. "The assumption is made that under certain conditions overt verbalizations will be approximately the same as implicit verbal responses; the methodological problem is to set up these conditions."

¹¹William J. McGuire, "A Syllogistic Analysis of Cognitive Relationships", Rosenberg, et al., op. cit., pp. 65-67.

¹²Fishbein, op. cit., p. 389.

¹³Martin Fishbein, "A Consideration of Beliefs and Their Role in Attitude Measurement", Ibid., p. 257, feels that this distinction is useful since affect and cognition are not always correlated. Underlying this feeling is an explicit value commitment toward bringing the definition of attitude into closer harmony with the techniques by which it is measured. Thus, Fishbein favors a unidimensional conceptualization of attitude.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 257.

¹⁵Fishbein, op. cit., pp. 389-390.

¹⁶Rokeach, op. cit., p. 116.

¹⁷M. Brewster Smith, "Personal Values as Determinants of a Political Attitude", Journal of Psychology, 27-28 (1949), pp. 477-486.

¹⁸Rokeach, op. cit., p. 124, very much epitomizes this point of view. "I consider a value to be a type of belief, centrally located within one's total belief system, about how one ought or ought not to behave, or about some end-state of existence worth or not worth attaining."

¹⁹Strictly speaking, analysis of this structure is relevant only to cognitive theorists. Hence, the particular approaches described by the Gestalt and functional schools in Chapters I and II are of relevance to this discussion. Attitudes and attitude components are seen as being related in a dynamic system. The individual maintains these relationships on the basis of "consistency"--consistency being, at least in part, a cognitive component related to individual perception. The individual attempts to maintain his cognitions in a simple, coherent, and orderly fashion, consistent with the Gestalt tenet of "good organization". Consistency is the "good gestalt".

²⁰In a general sense, this is true. However, the means-ends analysis is strictly applicable only to the functions the attitudes serve. This does not preclude the functional school from positing a tricomponent conceptualization of the structure of attitudes.

²¹Milton J. Rosenberg and Robert P. Abelson, "An Analysis of Cognitive Balancing", Rosenberg, et al., op. cit., pp. 112-163. Robert P. Abelson and Milton J. Rosenberg, "Symbolic Psycho-Logic: A Model of Attitudinal Cognition", Behavioral Science, 3 (1958), pp. 1-13.

²²Fishbein, op. cit., pp. 389-400.

²³Ibid., p. 394.

²⁴This discussion in a sense will depart from the tri-component scheme of analysis in that it will generally refer to the relationship between attitudes and behavior. Although it could continue strictly according to relationships among components, it appears more useful to proceed in the above fashion. The discussion may therefore be seen as relevant to the learning-behavior school as well.

²⁵Chester A. Insko, Theories of Attitude Change (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1967), p. 348. Representing a very similar point of view is Thomas M. Ostrom, "The Emergence of Attitude Theory: 1930-1950", Psychological Foundations of Attitudes, ed. Anthony C. Greenwald, Timothy C. Brock, and Thomas M. Ostrom (New York: Academic Press, 1968), p. 27, who states: "The bulk of attitude research and, consequently, the theory developed to understand the attitude change process, continues to focus primarily on affect to the detriment of understanding the other characteristics of attitude." The same point of view is expressed in somewhat different fashion by Martin Fishbein, "Attitude and the Prediction of Behavior", Fishbein, op. cit., p. 484, who states: "Here, I think, is where our major problem lies: we psychologists have never really studied behavior per se. By this I mean that we have usually taken behavior as a given; to the best of my knowledge, we--at least in the attitude area--have seldom, if ever, subjected our behavioral criteria to the same rigorous analysis to which we subject our paper- and pencil-tests."

²⁶Richard T. LaPiere, "Attitudes versus Actions", Social Forces, 13 (1934), pp. 230-237.

²⁷G. Nettler and E.H. Golding, "The Measurement of Attitudes Toward the Japanese in America", American Journal of Sociology, 52 (1946), pp. 31-39.

²⁸Charles A. Kiesler, Barry E. Collins, and Norman Miller, Attitude Change: A Critical Analysis of Theoretical Approaches (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1969), pp. 22-38.

²⁹Ibid., p. 29. This approaches the view put forward by Rokeach, op. cit., pp. 126-129, who feels that an individual not only has attitudes toward objects, but also has an attitude toward the context or situation in which the object appears. Thus, he would concur with LaPiere, op. cit., p. 232, who put forward the notion that quality and condition of clothing, appearance of baggage, cleanliness and neatness were of importance, as well as racial pigmentation.

³⁰Fishbein, op. cit., p. 484.

PART TWO

CHAPTER IV

THEORETICAL FORMULATIONS AND ATTITUDE CONCEPTUALIZATIONS IN AMERICAN VOTING STUDIES

In this chapter I have chosen to analyze what I feel are the four major American voting behavior studies. These include: Lazarsfeld, Berelson, and Gaudet, The People's Choice (1944); Berelson, Lazarsfeld, and McPhee, Voting (1954); Campbell, Gurin, and Miller, The Voter Decides (1954); and Campbell, Converse, Miller, and Stokes, The American Voter (1960). The analysis of these books is both developmental and comparative. As a consequence, the books are discussed in the order listed above. In each case, the general theoretical orientation that underlies that respective study is considered first. This having been done, an examination is made of the attitude conceptualization used in that study. This format is utilized for each of the four books discussed. Comparisons are drawn between adjacent works in the time sequence as well. This comparison provides a developmental perspective on attitude usage in these voting studies. A general comparison between the "Lazarsfeld group" (The People's Choice and Voting) and the "Michigan Survey Research group" (The Voter Decides and The American Voter) will also be presented.

The People's Choice¹ was based on a survey conducted in Erie County, Ohio during the course of the 1940 presidential election. It began with a model of voting behavior predicated on an analogy with consumer behavior in a highly competitive consumer goods market. Exposure to the mass media was postulated to be of prime importance to the individual's subsequent decision--i.e., the individual would filter through the information, sorting out and weighing the alternatives, until he finally reached a decision.² The findings completely disconfirmed this hypothesis. Most of these findings must be classed as incidental because they emerged unexpectedly from those subordinate variables which were included in the study as they were the standard factors utilized in the usual public opinion poll or market research study.³ These were the typical demographic variables of socioeconomic status, education, age, religion, etc. The ensuing analysis, as it reflected the utilization of these factors, appeared to be guided by sociological formulations. However, the development of this approach, predicated upon sociological variables other than mass media influences, must be regarded as being largely ad hoc, and, therefore, not guided by any formal theoretical considerations. An examination of the book reveals that the authors drew upon very few sources or references in their discussion, and, further, these references were not utilized as guides to theoretical development.

The study, as it was developed in a rather de novo

fashion, contained a commitment to explain the process by which an individual makes up his mind during the course of the campaign. As illustrated above, explanation of this process was initially based on the view that the individual, as a rational, independent voter, would sort through the election information, largely provided by the mass media, until he reached a decision. It was only a short step from this strategum to a similar position focusing on the influence of social and demographic groupings on the individual. Therefore, the authors can still state that attention was focused on "the formation, change, and development of public opinion."⁴ Attitude, which is used interchangeably with opinion throughout this study, thus becomes the key dependent and independent variable. Since opinion is not defined, this does not give us any real clues to the definition of the attitude concept. The meaning attributed to these concepts must be abstracted from the context in which they are used. Their usage suggests a highly operational view--attitudes and opinions are defined by particular categories of responses; i.e., this usage has an explicit behavioral referent.⁵

Although explicit concern with attitude conceptualization is absent, some important attitudinal notions are either evident in, or developed from the study. In particular, the authors were concerned with two groups of subjects--those who did not change their political opinions and those

who changed in a variety of ways.⁶ Most of their concern rested with explaining the changes in socioeconomic terms, i.e., the social context or environment was identified as of prime importance in the formation and change of political opinions or attitudes. Indeed, at one point they state: "Social characteristics determine political preference."⁷ However, little attention was devoted to the individual's perception of his various social environments.⁸ Nonetheless, the emergence of social factors such as socioeconomic status, education, opinion leaders, etc. direct attention toward an important conditioning variable, namely, situation. Further, the study embraces an implicit notion of attitudinal consistency. The conception of cross-pressures, although only developed at the social level, still implies an underlying tendency for the individual to seek consistency.

In conclusion, The People's Choice is best evaluated as an important study--important in the sense that it initiated a trend toward survey analysis. Its utilization of the attitudinal variable is mainly ad hoc, failing to achieve any rigor in conceptualization. However, it did identify, whether by intention or not, some factors, such as situation and social cross-pressures, which are important to attitude concepts.

It is interesting to note the transition between Voting and The People's Choice. The preface to the second edition

of The People's Choice provides some clues as to how this transition took place.¹⁰ Certain requirements for voting research are postulated, of which two are of particular relevance to the analysis here. These include the need to integrate facts and theories, and the need to carefully delineate the kinds of problems to be studied.¹¹ With regard to the former, the authors seemed particularly concerned with the problem of the stability and change of attitudes, and the consequent need to develop a theory to explain this phenomena. In theoretical terms, little was offered to account for these dynamic processes. More attention was devoted to the actual delineation and specification of the problems in this area.

In many ways Voting follows much the same format as The People's Choice. It was based on a survey conducted in Elmira, New York during the course of the 1948 presidential election. The panel technique is also utilized, although some refinements were made in the questions asked. Theoretical considerations seem more an afterword, rather than a guiding force, e.g., one of the latter chapters is entitled: "The Social Psychology of the Voting Decision".¹² At this point, there is some evidence of formal theoretical development, although the authors' main concern is to illustrate the implications of their findings for other related disciplines. For the most part, they do not draw upon related literature as a means of developing theoretical formulations. Moreover, the implicit model upon which this book is predicated is not

made explicit in this section.

Fundamentally, this study, although more psychologically oriented, is based on a model derived from the findings of The People's Choice. This underlying model has a close kinship with reference group theory. Basically, it seems that the authors have proceeded on the basis of a theory of interpersonal attraction. A good deal of attention is devoted to the voters' social environments--in particular, on the political preferences of respondents' friends, co-workers, and families. For any theory of interpersonal attraction, the nature of one's relationships with those in his social environment are of importance. The authors also pursue this point of view, albeit implicitly. As a result, much of the analysis focuses on "consistency" in interpersonal relations, and the consequences of various degrees of "consistency" and "inconsistency" for behavior. In general terms, it is "rewarding" to be "consistent" with one's social environment, and "nonrewarding" to be "inconsistent" with it. As examples of this point, consider the following somewhat lengthy list of statements abstracted from the book. These statements are not only indicative of this point of view, they are also illustrative of the implicit nature of this theme.

1. It is the people with "cross-pressured" opinions on the issues or candidates or parties--that is, opinions or views simultaneously supporting different sides--who are more likely to be unstable in their voting position during the campaign (page 19).

2. Since partisanship increases political interest, anything that weakens partisan feelings decreases interest. Such is the effect of attitudinal "cross-pressures": people whose attitudes on specific issues are consistent with their vote intention have greater interest than those whose specific attitudes do not correspond with their vote intention (page 27).

3. In general, then, the Republicans get more than their random share of the adjustment to a conflicting environment, because of the persuasive Republican atmosphere of Elmira that thus tends to perpetuate itself. The surrounding majority gets the benefit of the operation of cross-pressures (page 100).

4. Those who discuss politics with the opposition are more likely than others subsequently to take on that opposite preference in their own voting (page 119).

5. Among Catholics, defection is more frequent if the respondent was originally Republican; among Protestants, defection is greater if he was a Democrat. It is the political minority in each religious stratum that has the more unstable vote intention (page 124).

6. The "proper" vote intention for a given stratum is more stable (page 125).

7. This leaves some voters with split opinions--liberal on one set of issues and conservative on the other--in a cross-pressured situation potentially if not actually. . . .

How are such inconsistencies overridden? A few cross-pressured voters act like the proverbial donkey and do not vote at all. Others, however, do make a choice between the parties. How do they manage to do so? One answer is: through the weights or priorities assigned, by the individual himself or by larger events, to the relevant issues (page 200).

8. In almost every instance respondents perceive their candidate's stand on these issues as similar to their own and the opponent's stand as dissimilar--whatever their own position (page 220).

9. The answer is that voters who disagree with both candidates stands on the issues, as they perceive them, end by supporting their group's "proper" candidate (page 225).

10. In any event, the voters manage to use the materials of politics, even of a presidential campaign, for their

own psychological protection--for the avoidance of some inconsistencies in their beliefs that otherwise would be manifest (page 230).

11. Third, perception must reduce or even eliminate certain political cross-pressures before they come to the level of visibility--before they start pressing (page 231).

12. While theory regarding these cross-pressures is not yet particularly advanced, an impressive series of empirical results has accumulated over the last fifteen years of research. An individual who is characterized by any type of cross-pressure is likely to change his mind in the course of the campaign, to make up his mind in the course of the campaign, and occasionally to leave the field and not to vote at all (page 284).

Examination of statements 3, 4, 5, 6, and 9 reveals the importance attributed to the social context--to reinforcement and reward deriving from one's social groupings. An individual's political attitudes are thus viewed as being grounded in the group-norms represented by the people around him.¹³ Further, most of the above statements make inferences or direct statements as to how inconsistency is resolved. These include taking less interest (2), going in the direction of the majority (3, 5, 6, and 9), adding new information which leads to a revaluation of own position (4), abstention from voting (7 and 12), evaluation of certain elements as being of greater importance (7), selective perception (8, 9, 10, and 11), and delaying the time of decision (12). This resolution of inconsistency is seen as being "consistent" with some implicit tenets of interpersonal attraction.

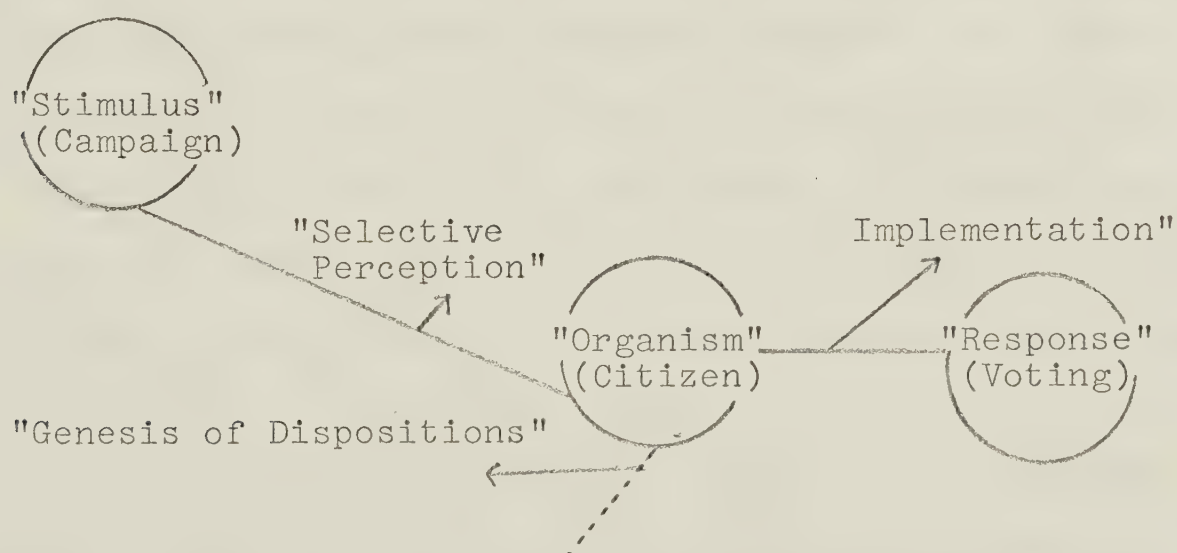
As stated above, this model seems to be derived from

the findings of The People's Choice. Therefore, it certainly represents an advance in theoretical terms. It is certainly lamentable, however, that the authors did not choose to make their theory explicit, and, further, did not choose to integrate it with some of the literature available at this time.

Examination of the following statement reveals that attitudes, among other things, are regarded as key explanatory variables in this study.

The analytical task then consists in relating preceding attitudes, expectations, personal contacts, group affiliations, and similar data to the final decision. . . . The core of panel analysis consists in relating earlier experiences or attitudes to later changes in the respondent's vote intention.¹⁴

Toward the end of the book, the authors become somewhat more explicit on this point of view. Consider the following diagram.¹⁵



The authors state that their main concern rests with implementation:

. . . (T)he way in which more or less vague dispositions, intentions, and interests regarding a specific subject matter may lead, finally, to the performance of a specific act like . . . voting for a candidate.¹⁶

Therefore, various sorts of dispositions, intentions, interests, expectations, personal contacts, group affiliations, etc. have been given the key explanatory role. However, the authors seem to be particularly concerned with attitudes or opinions (note the subtitle of their book: "A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign"). Further, they are concerned with attitudes or opinions as independent and dependent variables, i.e. they utilize attitudes as explanatory variables, as in the fashion described above, and they also focus on attitudes as variables to be explained. In either case, attitudes are seen as mediating, dispositional concepts. Other variables are also given dispositional qualities, as is evident in the following statement: "Each voter may have several dozen motives, needs, values, attitudes, and other dispositions which could be brought into play in the election."¹⁷ All these factors appear to be some variant of dispositions, although at no point is an attempt made to distinguish among these terms. Nonetheless, some attempt is made to define the attitude concept. The authors state that attitudes are composed of direction and intensity.¹⁸ Direction is employed to refer to dimensions such as pro and con, left and right, Democratic and Republican, whereas intensity is utilized to describe how strongly one feels about an issue. The operational treatment of attitudes does not proceed according to

this format--i.e., measures do not include these two aspects. For example, the level of one's interest, which is utilized conceptually as an indicator of intensity, is really treated as an independent variable having a strong relation to political involvement.¹⁹ As noted by the authors, intensity is generally used to refer to how strongly one holds an attitude--i.e. it refers to the "importance" of the attitude for the individual. However, asking one how interested he is does not seem to accomplish this goal, unless one assumes "ego-involvement" from general interest level, which further assumes that the interest question taps this level. At any rate, a rather strong case could be made that interest does not tap the intensity dimension. The directional component receives operational treatment through the tapping of behavioral indicators, rather than affect as is implied in the above. As an example of this, party preference (supposedly a feeling pro or con for a particular party) is measured by vote intention.²⁰

Therefore, an individual's response tendency is defined as his attitude. To further complicate the matter, attitudes and opinions tend to be used interchangeably.²¹ Rigor in conceptualization of the attitude concept is thus not a virtue of this study.

Attitude usage, as employed in Voting, is almost identical to its usage in The People's Choice. A highly

operational view of attitude as working definition is evident--i.e., attitude is defined by response categories.

The Voter Decides²² utilized a nation-wide survey as a means of studying the 1952 presidential election. Data from a 1948 election study were used, as well, for comparative purposes.

Clearly, this study represents a shift in theoretical focus from Voting. Emphasis is explicitly placed on the immediate psychological determinants of behavior, rather than on social determinants. Consider the following statement made after the authors have identified the act of voting as the major dependent variable.

We are concerned with individual motivation. We approach this problem not at the level of external factors such as campaign appeals, personal conversations, or other isolated aspects of the total stimulating situation leading up to Election Day, but rather at the level of the intervening variables of attitudes, perceptions, and group loyalties which mediate between the external environmental facts and the individual response. We have attempted to identify the major components that make up the total matrix of forces influencing the individual vote. It is hypothesized that these factors interact dynamically to determine the individual's behavior in the area of politics, stimulating his participation when they reinforce each other, inhibiting it when they are in conflict.²³

At this point, these latter two statements will be examined more closely. The first of these, dealing with the identification of major components, has an interesting history. Exactly how this happened is rather intriguing from a theoretical point of view. First, the variables defined and measured were not

systematically derived from existing theory.²⁴ Rather, they were chosen somewhat arbitrarily, although according to the authors' reasoned view. Six factors were proposed to have relevance for the individual's decision to vote and to his choice of candidates. In the ensuing data analysis, the impact of these factors was assessed. From this analysis, the conclusion was drawn that intervening partisan attitudes are additive in their effect on voting choice.²⁵ This conclusion, which appears to be based on nothing more than an assumption required for use of a simple linear regression model, also underlies subsequent work by these authors. This assumption of linear additivity would not appear to be consistent with hypothesis implicit in the second statement above; namely, that effects of conditioning factors interact dynamically. At any rate, the underlying assumption is that behavior is the resultant of the total impact of a number of forces.²⁶ The interaction of these forces is seen as following some sort of cognitive consistency postulate. Therefore, when such forces are in conflict, the probability of a response such as voting is reduced; and conversely, when they are congruent with one another, the probability of response activity is increased.

Comparing this theoretical orientation to that of Voting reveals a basic difference related to the level of analysis. The theoretical focus of Voting clearly lies on the social and psychological levels, whereas the theoretical

focus of The Voter Decides is clearly psychological. However, a similar assumption of "consistency" underlies both approaches although in Voting consistency is used in reference to both social and psychological forces. At any rate, the assumptions about behavior as the product of consistent or inconsistent forces are similar.

How then does The Voter Decides treat the attitude concept? As was seen in an above statement, the authors' approach is to treat attitudes as intervening variables; yet, not only are attitudes regarded as intervening variables, but so also are perceptions and group loyalties which are distinguished from attitudes in this listing. As in Voting, no attempt has been made either to distinguish further among concepts, or to clarify or specify the attitude concept further. Consequently, it is necessary to examine the usage of the attitude concept to determine the meaning attributed to it.

The authors' identification of their set of major psychological variables does not provide much aid in clarifying their usage of the attitude notion. Rather, these are spoken of simply as being "intervening variables", a term which apparently can be applied to attitudes, expectations (note the change here, earlier they spoke of perception), or group loyalties.²⁷ More specifically, these factors include the following:

1. Personal identification with one of the political parties;

2. Concern with issues of national governmental policy;
3. Personal attraction to the presidential candidates;
4. Conformity to the group standards of one's associates;
5. A sense of personal efficacy in the area of politics;
6. A sense of civic obligation to vote.²⁸

The latter two of these are regarded as having relevance only for voter turnout considerations, whereas the first four are regarded as having relevance for turnout and the direction of the vote. Particular attention is devoted to the first three variables, and an appendix discussion is provided for the latter three. A brief discussion of these variables is useful at this point not only to clarify the meaning associated with each concept, but also to indicate that the authors have made no explicit attempt to distinguish the types of psychological variables involved.

The sense of personal attachment which an individual feels toward a party is regarded as "party identification".²⁹ Little is said about the concept that could be interpreted as related to what psychologists treat as the process of "identification". It is largely feeling or affect which seems to be the basis of this psycho-political concept. Measurement of it as a variable allows also for intensity or strength of this identification.

The concept of issue orientation is regarded as embracing two major components:

1. Sensitivity to differences in party positions on issues related to governmental action;

2. Involvement in issues which are perceived as being affected by the outcome of an election.³⁰

A cognitive dimension is thus made explicit, particularly in the first component. The second component is regarded as having two dimensions, degree of concern with an issue, and direction.³¹ From these three variables two measures are developed, extent of issue orientation and issue partisanship.³² Issue orientation is consequently measured by a cognitive and an affective component.

The authors note that candidate orientation could be conceived as having two dimensions, extent of candidate orientation and candidate partisanship.³³ However, they prefer to define it in terms of candidate appeal.³⁴ Consequently, candidate orientation is measured solely as an affective component.

As previously mentioned, the conceptualization of the three remaining variables is dealt with in appendices near the end of the book. This occasions the need to read the appendices before beginning on the body of the text. The notions of political efficacy and citizen duty are developed through measurement based on the Guttman scaling technique.³⁵ Consequently, the items are felt to have been drawn from a unidimensional universe of such items (supposedly in the direction of affect), and are assumed to be cumulative in terms of the amount of that attitude each successive item taps. The

cumulative property, as developed in Guttman scaling, is supposedly indicated by the reciprocal of the response rate, i.e., the "item difficulty". This means that the more difficult it is to obtain a response to an item, the greater the amount of attitude tapped by that item. The authors offer no justification as to why these items should be cumulative. One could assume that this relates to their previous assumptions regarding cognitive consistency and the probability of a response being increased or decreased according to positive or conflicting forces. However, this assumption does not appear to be based on cumulative considerations.

The other psychological variable relating to conformity to group standards is developed along perceptual lines and makes assumptions about the psychological meaningfulness of particular groups.³⁶ These assumptions relate basically to the individual's tendency to conform to group standards, particularly primary group standards.

In conclusion, the authors of The Voter Decides have not developed a very rigorous conceptualization of their psychological variables. Basically, they are regarded as affective variables which intervene, and consequently motivate, behavior. However, in the case of issue orientation, a cognitive component is also evident. Underlying the whole psychological system is a vague assumption dealing with the interrelationship of these attitudes in some sort of "consistent" fashion. This assumption is obviously quite important to the

explanations of voting behavior that the authors offer, yet they do not expand upon it in any thorough manner.

At a conceptual level the usage of the attitudinal variable in Voting and The Voter Decides is basically similar. For both, it is viewed as a dispositional concept. In neither work is any attempt made to clarify it beyond this characterization, or to distinguish it carefully from other concepts that are used. However, it is apparent in Voting that attitudes (opinions) are the major dependent variables. In The Voter Decides, this status is applied to a larger set of "psychological variables".

The operational treatment of these variables provides a major point of differentiation between these studies. In Voting, a highly operational usage is evident--attitudes are defined by response tendencies. That is, these response tendencies basically measure behavioral intentions. In The Voter Decides, the authors primarily are concerned with measuring affect, although in some cases their measures include cognitive dimensions.

The American Voter³⁷ is a study of comparative voting behavior in the 1952 and 1956 presidential elections, utilizing data from a panel survey to draw the desired comparisons. It begins with the similar concern of The Voter Decides, namely, to explain the act of voting--"Our theoretical schema takes the act of voting as the datum to be explained. . ."³⁸--

by focusing on individual motivation--". . . we begin with the immediate psychological influences on the voting act."³⁹ Similar, though more detailed and explicit, "consistency" postulates are utilized. The underlying theoretical model is predicated upon a structure contained in the "funnel of causality".⁴⁰ This funnel is a rather inclusive explanatory device. The particular dependent behavior to be explained is found at the stem of the funnel, with its various determining factors chained backward through time in terms of their temporal relation to this behavior. Behavior is thus regarded as occurring as a result of multiple causes; causes which can encompass any time period desired. The authors, however, delimit the focus of their attention to personal factors in the following fashion.

By and large we shall consider external conditions as exogeneous to our theoretical system. We want to understand the individual's response to politics by exploring the way he perceives the objects and events of the political world. Our approach is in the main dependent on the point of view of the actor. We assume that most events or conditions that bear directly upon behavior are perceived in some form or other by the individual prior to the determined behavior, and that much of behavior consists of reactions to these perceptions.⁴¹

This focus necessarily limits the time period with which they deal. They feel that when prediction is made for a short time period that "few events or conditions not already personal can intervene to deflect behavior to a new course."⁴² Having thus demarcated the funnel of causality at the particular point of time where personal factors are supposedly of the

greatest immediate importance, the authors then make their choice of attitudinal variables more explicit, while also attempting to justify their utilization. They state:

The use of political attitudes to predict voting behavior hinges upon this proximal mode of explanation. It assumes that whatever effect distant events (being unemployed in 1933) may have on current political behavior (deciding to vote Democratic), this effect must be present and measurable in some form (suspicion of Republican domestic policy) just prior to the dependent event. If present in no form, then the effect cannot be considered to be a determinant of the event.⁴³

In terms of the psychological factors employed, this is the same model which underlies the theoretical orientation of The Voter Decides. However, The American Voter model is more elaborate in this regard, a feature largely due to the time period considered. These factors will become more obvious in the ensuing discussion of the attitude concept as utilized in The American Voter. Many of the precepts, assumptions, etc., of the consistency theories can be seen in these authors' development of the attitude concept, although they make no attempt to relate this discussion to the theoretical development in the social psychological literature.

The attitude concept receives a good deal of formal conceptual analysis, although this treatment is varied and dispersed throughout the book. In the following I have attempted to bring together these various points of view.

First, the authors have an explicit commitment to the

idea of a dynamic cognitive system.

We speak of an "attitude structure" when two or more beliefs or opinions held by an individual are in some way or another functionally related. . . . (W)e would feel that we had struck upon a cluster of attitudes that were functionally related, inasmuch as there seems to be interdependence between each opinion and the others.⁴⁴

It should be noted that belief and attitude are seen as indistinguishable. Further, this statement implicitly identifies beliefs or opinions as attitudes. Thus, the failure to differentiate the attitude concept from other concepts persists in this book as it did in the others.

The authors see attitudes as bound together in such structures by either or both of two kinds of functional relationships; a means-end relationship (i.e. holding an attitude as a means to achieving a particular goal) and/or a need relationship (i.e. two or more attitudes operating in the service of a similar need).⁴⁵ Generally, the notion of function is utilized to indicate interdependence. Accordingly, the authors feel they can talk about attitude structure in these terms. As will be seen, the authors apparently feel that the given attitudes composing a particular structure all contribute equally to a given behavior.

Attitudes are also seen as having both cognitive and affective properties.

It is the cognitive map of national politics held by the American electorate that is our concern here.

Plainly the map is a colored one. The elements of politics that are visible to the electorate are not simply seen; they are evaluated as well. Evaluation is the stuff of political life, and the cognitive image formed by the individual of the political world tends to be positively and negatively toned in its several parts. This mixture of cognition and evaluation, of belief and attitude, of percept and affect is so complete that we will speak of the individual's cognitive and affective map of politics.⁴⁶

While we can see from this statement that the authors have theoretically distinguished between cognition and affect, they seem to equate attitudes with affect, and affect with evaluation. The equating of affect and evaluation is unfortunate, not only because it is a debatable course of action, but also because it does not appear to be necessary to their formulation. What is the relation between cognition and affect? Are these components of a similar factor, or are they merely correlates? Such clearly important issues are not dealt with. The implication given from their discussion of functional relationships is that they are interdependent components of a single theoretical entity, rather than merely correlates of one another. However, the question of the configuration of attitude structures is avoided. Consequently, when the authors discuss partisan attitudes and their index of political involvement the reader is left in a good deal of confusion. This becomes more evident in the discussion to follow.

Attitudes are assumed to be strongly related to behavior. ". . . (W)e begin our search for causality at the psychological level and conceive of the voting act as the

resultant of attitudinal forces."⁴⁷ Behavior is regarded not as just a correlate of attitudes, but rather as a product of attitudinal forces. Furthermore, the conative, or behavior, component of most contemporary attitude conceptualizations is not included in the one used in The American Voter. Behavior is not regarded as a component part of an attitude, but rather is seen as an external phenomenon related to it.

Once again, attitudes are seen as having direction and intensity properties,⁴⁸ as well as a commitment dimension related to an individual's general psychological involvement with politics.⁴⁹ At least implicitly, situational factors are given a good deal of importance.⁵⁰

As used there, intensity merely refers to the strength of feeling associated with the attitude. The authors wish to measure not only the direction of a partisan attitude (e.g. pro-Democrat), they also wish to measure the intensity with which that attitude is held (e.g. does the person see himself as a strong supporter of the Democrats?). This suggests the possibility that attitudes will be nonadditively and/or non-linearly related to behavior, or to one another in terms of the intensity dimension. These possibilities are not explored when the authors put together their partisan attitudes dimension. Indeed, the authors implicitly deny these possibilities by virtue of simply adding the six partisan attitudes in their analysis of joint effects on voting behavior indicators.⁵¹

The commitment dimension, based on a notion of general psychological involvement in politics, apparently is distinguished in meaning from the concept of intensity. Certain factors (interest in an election, concern about that election, sense of political efficacy, and sense of citizen duty) are employed to tap this dimension without any theoretical justification for their usage given.

My comments thus far have dealt with the conceptual treatment accorded the attitude variable in The American Voter. At this point I shall turn to an analysis of the manner in which attitude is utilized for explanatory purposes in this study. The discussion will evolve about two basic concepts employed by the authors: the partisan attitude dimension, and the index of political involvement. Both concepts contain many of the ambiguities of reasoning already discussed.

In order to explain the partisan direction of voting choice, Campbell and his associates rely heavily on a discussion of the nature and determinants of party preference. The ideas characterizing their understanding of this phenomenon are evident in the following quote.

In assessing the impact on behavior of the public's cognitive and affective map of politics we will have to describe this map in terms of individual attitude. In this chapter we will conceive the individual's evaluative orientations toward the several elements of politics as a system of partisan attitudes and examine the place of this system among the psychological forces governing behavior.⁵²

Having made this statement the authors proceed to define six dimensions of individual partisan feeling. These include feelings held about:

the personal attributes of Stevenson; the personal attributes of Eisenhower; the groups involved in politics and the questions of group interest affecting them; the issues of domestic policy; the issues of foreign policy; and the comparative record of the two parties in managing the affairs of government.⁵³

These dimensions each are seen to indicate not only the direction of an individual's attitude toward a given element of politics, but also to indicate the intensity of that partisan attitude. It should be noted that each of these dimensions are considered as separate attitudes operating within an inter-related system. Their treatment of these attitudes follows along the lines of their general theoretical notion about the number of congruent forces acting upon an individual. The greater the number of "consistent" attitudes held by the individual in question, the greater the likelihood of stability in political preference and the greater the probability of voting. The respondents are placed along a continuum based on their scores on the attitude dimensions. Then, in effect, these six attitude dimensions are combined (on the basis of an unjustified assumption that the contribution of each is of equal weight) into a single attitude, partisan feeling. The introduction of the notion of partisan feeling thus means that feeling and evaluation are being used interchangeably as evaluation was originally utilized to describe

the partisan attitude system. However, it is questionable whether these are the same. For example, is it not possible that my evaluation of a political candidate might be negative (i.e. based on "qualifications"), and yet my feeling toward him might be positive. On logical, as well as present theoretical grounds, i.e., consistency theory, we would expect these two dimensions to be related, yet the authors do not tell us what to expect. It appears that the authors have decided that, although cognition and affect can be theoretically distinguished, they cannot be distinguished in fact, as they are closely linked. Neither do they tell us what the choice of the term evaluation adds to the analysis. It appears to represent an attempt to combine the notions of perception, cognition, and affect in a terminological fashion. Yet we are not told so, nor is any justification of the use of the term offered. Similarly, their notion of a system of partisan attitudes is highly ambiguous. Their usage suggests that these are all separate attitudes which, taken together, have a linear, additive effect on behavior. Nevertheless, they combine these dimensions into a single dimension which they have labeled as an attitude. Therefore, what is that attitude? Partisanship? Does it exist as a distinct factor, is it just a summary of the six component attitudes, which supposedly have existential status? Moreover, do several attitudes combine to make a single attitude? If the conglomerate attitude has meaning, then is there any utility left in distinguishing

the six components of it as attitudes in their own right? Certainly, the authors do not answer such important questions as these. Indeed, they appear to avoid any discussion of attitude configurations, at least at this point in their analysis.

The discussion of their second basic concept, the index of political involvement,⁵⁴ reveals further ambiguities both within this dimension and between it and the conceptual treatment of partisan attitudes. Again, the authors regard this dimension, designed to explain voting turnout, as a system of attitudes. Further, each "attitude", in the system employed, is once more operationally utilized as contributing equally to the resulting single dimension. Two of the attitudes--interest in the election and concern with the election outcome--are regarded as being specific to a particular election, while the other two--sense of political efficacy and sense of citizen duty--are regarded as being related to politics and elections generally. The former two are based on responses to single questionnaire items, whereas the latter are based on Guttman scaling techniques wherein several items are utilized to define the attitude dimension. This employment of several items to define the attitude would seem to approach a notion of attitude configuration. Once again, conceptual distinctions have not been made. What is the attitude? Why should we assume that the four measures of attitude contribute equally to the index of political involvement? No justifications are offered.

It is clear that the key independent variables used in The American Voter are attitudinal in character. The attitude concept thus occupies a position of importance which it did not have in The Voter Decides. However, in their attempts to make its role more explicit, and to further develop the notion conceptually, the authors seem to have made the attitude concept less clear. As a consequence, important and relevant distinctions are not made between it and other related concepts which are central to the explanations these authors offer regarding the influence of attitudinal factors upon voting behavior in the United States.

Conclusion. In conclusion, some general remarks can be made about attitude conceptualization in these voting studies, as well as about a point of fundamental difference between the "Lazarsfeld group" and the "Michigan Survey Research Center group".

First, the above survey studies are deficient in that they fail to treat the attitude concept rigorously. Consequently, the presumed importance of the attitudinal concept as an independent, explanatory variable disappears--that is, in the sense that beliefs, opinions, perceptions, evaluations, expectations, values, etc. are not differentiated from the attitude concept and thus can be used interchangeably. As a result, the means of measuring attitudes varies with whatever notions the authors see as definitionally similar at the time.

This statement contains the implicit assumption that attitude, as utilized in social psychology, is an important concept; and, further, that differentiation from other concepts is meaningful. (We have seen in our discussion in Part One that this assumption is certainly accepted by some leading attitude psychologists spanning a considerable period of time.) It is thus not only important to distinguish conceptually between attitudes and other psychological phenomena, but also to distinguish among what are thought to be attitude components. These distinctions provide not only theoretical lucidity, but add both clarity and precision to efforts directed at operationalizing these concepts in terms of measurements. In these terms we can see that lapses of conceptual rigor are bound to result in visiting failure on measurement efforts. Thus, on both of these research dimensions the survey studies discussed here would seem deficient.

The general criticism being rendered here applies differently to the two main groups of scholars. In this respect, the lapses of rigor in conceptualizing the major variable type, attitudes, occur in terms of different dimensions for each group of theorists. The Lazarsfeld group, emphasizing the influences of the social context, find a strong point in their discussion of the "situatedness" of social attitudes, while badly neglecting such purely psychological dimensions as cognitive components and their infra-structure. In the case of the Michigan group, almost the diametrically opposite

statement could be made. With the exception of the treatment of the development of party identification in The American Voter, these authors give little emphasis to the conditioning effect of the situation reflected in those expressions of attitude made by the individual. These differences can be traced to the fact that the Lazarsfeld group has tended to emphasize sociological explanations of political phenomena, whereas the Michigan group have stressed psychological explanations for such phenomena.

FOOTNOTES, CHAPTER IV

¹Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet, The People's Choice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1940).

²Peter H. Rossi, "Four Landmarks in Voting Research", Eugene Burdick and Arthur J. Brodbeck, American Voting Behavior (Glencoe: The Free Press, 1959), pp. 15-17.

³Ibid., p. 19.

⁴Lazarsfeld et al., op. cit., p. x.

⁵As examples of this see Ibid., p. xi, where the authors equate vote intention with political attitudes; Ibid., p. xx, where the authors utilize family voting patterns as indicators of the stability of attitudes; and Ibid., p. 32, where the authors differentiate between attitudes of the supporters of the two parties according to the type of man they would choose.

⁶Ibid., p. x.

⁷Ibid., p. 27.

⁸This is not to say that the authors do not recognize the importance of individual perception. For example, Ibid., p. 20, at one point they discuss the importance of a person's own class identification. However, for the most part, development of their study along these lines is negligible--it is developed rather strongly in their later work, Voting.

⁹Bernard Berelson, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and William N. McPhee, Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1954).

¹⁰Lazarsfeld, et al., op. cit., pp. vii-xxvii.

¹¹Ibid., p. viii.

¹²Ibid., pp. 277-304.

¹³Ibid., p. 98.

¹⁴Ibid., p. viii.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 278.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 278-279.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 250.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 14.

¹⁹Ibid., pp. 24-28.

²⁰Ibid., p. 15.

²¹Ibid., pp. 14, 16-17.

²²Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin, and Warren Miller, The Voter Decides (Evanston: Row, Peterson and Company, 1954).

²³Ibid., pp. 7-8.

²⁴Angus Campbell and Donald E. Stokes, "Partisan Attitudes and the Presidential Vote", Burdick and Brodbent, op. cit., p. 353.

²⁵Ibid., pp. 354-355.

²⁶Campbell, Gurin, and Miller, op. cit., p. 87.

²⁷Ibid., pp. 85-86.

²⁸Ibid., p. 86.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 88-89.

³⁰Ibid., p. 112.

³¹Ibid., p. 113.

³²Ibid., p. 114.

³³Ibid., p. 136.

³⁴Ibid.

³⁵Ibid., pp. 187-206.

³⁶Ibid., pp. 206-215.

³⁷Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, The American Voter (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1964), an abridgement.

³⁸Ibid., p. 5.

³⁹Ibid., p. 13.

⁴⁰Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, The American Voter (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1960), pp. 24-38.

⁴¹Ibid., p. 27.

⁴²Ibid., p. 28.

⁴³Ibid., p. 34.

⁴⁴Campbell et al. (1964), op. cit., p. 110.

⁴⁵Ibid.

⁴⁶Ibid., p. 15.

⁴⁷Ibid., p. 32.

⁴⁸Ibid., pp. 32-33.

⁴⁹Ibid., pp. 55-57.

⁵⁰Ibid., pp. 31-48.

⁵¹Ibid., p. 37.

⁵²Ibid., p. 31.

⁵³Ibid., p. 33.

⁵⁴Ibid., pp. 55-64.

CHAPTER V

THE ROLE OF BEHAVIOR IN ATTITUDINAL EXPLANATIONS

In this chapter, I will consider the role within which behavior typically relates to, or figures in, attitudinal explanations, making direct application of my comments to the manner in which this question is handled in the four American voting studies. Attitude has most commonly been regarded as a dispositional variable which "conditions", "motivates", or otherwise "causes" behavioral responses. In this sense, the dispositional variable represents an antecedent condition within the context of which the stimulus and response are manifested. The stimuli (attitude objects) are related to the style of behavior given in response to them, only because the dispositional variable acts as a conditioning agent upon this relationship. The relationship between the stimulus and the response depends upon the existence of the attitude. By extending this line of thought, one can see that if the effects of the attitudinal variable were controlled for, the relation between the stimulus and the response would disappear. To this point, the role played by an attitude, as a dispositional variable, seems rather straightforward and obvious. Difficulties do emerge, however, when the implications of treating attitude as a dispositional factor are considered.

These difficulties are no less evident for analysts of voting behavior than they are for attitude psychologists. As will be seen, concern for these problems has been more manifest among the latter than the former.

What problem attends the treatment of attitudes as dispositional variables? A disposition, as a mental state, is a theoretical construct; that is, it is hypothetical and inferred. Attitudes are typically inferred from characteristic patternings of verbal or physical behavior. As dispositions they often are seen as possessing existential status, i.e., presumably being seen to exist apart from the patterns of behavior that they reference and summarize. In this light, they are regarded as something more than mere labels utilized as summary and reference conveniences. The problem, then, is how we are ever to know that attitudes exist, in an empirical sense, apart from the behavior from which their presence has been inferred. The problem of demonstrating the separate existence of an attitude, as a mental disposition, seems irresolvable. But the treatment of the existence of such dispositional factors as inferred datum from behavior patterns has important implications for the manner in which attitudes are and can be studied.

What are these implications? Behavior enters the argument both in the operation of inferring the existence of an attitude and, generally, as the variable to be explained.

Further, some sort of behavioral indicator is usually used as a criterion against which the validity of the attitude inference is checked. Thus, there are at least three points at which the theoretical and operational characterization of behavior variables are important to the development of attitudinal explanations. This statement clearly suggests the importance of a clear conceptual and operational treatment of the nature of the particular behavior under consideration. The present chapter takes up the discussion of how behavior variables have been characterized in the four major American voting studies. More particularly, the following analysis examines the manner in which behavioral variables have been utilized, not only as dependent variables, but as indicators from which attitudes have been inferred, as well as serving in the capacity of validity criteria. The discussion will be restricted to some of the key ideas involved in each of the studies. Before proceeding, it should be noted that the above discussion is relevant to all four voting studies, since in all four, attitudes have been conceptualized as dispositional factors.

The Index of Political Predisposition was one of the central measures developed in The People's Choice.¹ In constructing this index, the authors investigated the direction of party support displayed by different social and socio-economic groupings. It was found that Protestants, rural people, and people from the higher levels of socio-economic

status all supported the Republican Party more heavily than they did the Democratic Party.² Using these three variables--religion, place of residence, and SES--in a multiple regression, with party preference as the dependent variable, the authors found themselves able to explain 25 percent of the variance in party preferences; i.e., an R^2 equal to 0.5 was found.³ On this basis, Lazarsfeld and his associates felt it warranted to declare that: "Social characteristics determine political preference."⁴ With these findings in hand, the Index of Political Predisposition was constructed by assigning a person a designated point score for each group membership he held in those social groups or groupings that were pro-Republican; for example, a person who was Protestant, rural, and from a high SES level received the summary index score of 1. In other words, a person's attitude--in this case in terms of the direction of his political party preference--was inferred from the behavior of those groups and groupings of which he was seen to be a member.

Now it has been noted before that attitudes have generally been treated as a class of variables taken to indicate "individual differences". Yet, in The People's Choice, one of the main attitudinal variables--one's preferential disposition toward support of a particular political party--is actually inferred from the behavioral attributes of social groups rather than those of the individuals concerned. In this context, it would seem reasonable to question the

authenticity of using the variable tapped by the Index of Political Predisposition in the traditional "individual differences" explanatory role ascribed to attitudinal variables. Would it not be more useful, and certainly less confusing, to leave the conceptualization at the more "macro" level of group influence factors? Why not just present the findings in a manner which indicates that, in the aggregate, certain social groups tend to support certain parties more than they do other parties? As attitudinal indicators of individual differences, group memberships appear to be too gross. In this sense they cover up the variation in attitude that might exist within a group and thus, in such a usage, appear as a particular form of the "group fallacy".

It should be noted also that the notion of "vote" utilized by these authors refers to a respondent's vote intention. The two are used interchangeably as if they were the same thing which may, of course, be a reasonable position to adopt. However, vote intention is also employed as a means of validating the Index of Political Predisposition. It has thus been used as both a dependent variable, "explained" by an attitudinal predisposition that is indicated by social group memberships, and as a "check" on the validity of the index used to measure that predisposition. If it is to be considered as an appropriate and adequate validity criterion then it must share some common meaning properties with the

factor the measure of which it validates. At this point, then, the argument begins to appear tautological: vote intention, the behavior to be explained, appears to share the same definition as the factor being used to explain it.

Even if we do admit that their argument is not tautological, how much do they explain? Although a high positive correlation is found (e.g. 74 percent of those strongly Republican intend to vote Republican, and 83 percent of those strongly Democratic intend to vote Democratic)⁵ the "unexplained" categories are sufficiently large to seriously question the validity of the Index of Political Predisposition. Indeed, closer examination of their findings reveals a validity coefficient of approximately .35, which certainly does not suggest a very strong relationship.

We have thus seen a distinct weakness in the treatment of the role of behavior in developing an attitudinal explanation central to the thesis of The People's Choice. It seems legitimate to ask, then, "Did these authors remedy their weaknesses of reasoning in the attitudinal explanations offered in their next voting study volume, Voting?"

A key notion underlying much of the analysis in Voting is the concept of consistency among attitudes and among social groups. The following discussion will explore the utilization of this theme in the authors' examination of aspects of party preferences.⁶ In particular, attention is

focused on some of the consequences (as perceived by the authors) resulting from feelings of partisanship. Party preference is very much an attitudinal variable--it is regarded as describing the direction of a political attitude,⁷ and is characterized as being "long-standing" or enduring.⁸ Vote intention is the behavioral indicator from which party preference is inferred. This represents a rather different indicator than the one used in The People's Choice, namely, group memberships. Gradations in party preference are established according to the strength of feeling associated with the voting choice.⁹ What are some of the results attendant to various degrees of partisanship? For one thing, the authors find that "the more strongly the voter favors or opposes parties and candidates, the more interested he is in the election."¹⁰ Indeed, they further state that "partisanship increases political interest."¹¹ To arrive at a measure of interest, the authors first assumed that "almost all measures of political involvement and participation are highly correlated with one another and, for analytical purposes, interchangeable."¹² Interest is regarded as a measure of political involvement and participation, and is ascertained by the following question. "How much interest would you say you have in this year's election--a great deal, quite a lot, not very much, none at all?"¹³ As an indicator of the level of one's interest in an election perhaps this measure is as good as, or better than, any possible alternative. Why is it

necessary, however, to further utilize the interest concept as interchangeable with, and therefore indicative of, political involvement and participation? A conclusion presented by the authors tends to invalidate their assumption somewhat. They state: "Although subjective expressions of interest by the sample did not change, behavioral manifestations of interest, like political discussion with one's associates, did change under external pressures."¹⁴ One might raise the question, "To what extent do findings such as these invalidate the interest measure?" Are the respondents being truthful? Without dwelling too deeply on considerations such as these, it is possible to see that the utilization of behavioral indicators has not been instituted with a good deal of care and precision. Yet, we have seen that they must be used since this is apparently the only way we have of inferring attitudes.

At a later point, the authors are concerned with the manner in which the voter's perception of group support is related to political preference and the effect it has.¹⁵ In general, they find that "partisans managed perceptually to 'pull' such social groups their own way."¹⁶ In other words, a respondent tends to see those social groups relevant to him as favoring the same party as himself. As a measure of perception, respondents were merely asked how certain groups were going to vote. The analysis at this point seems more straightforward and less fraught with conceptual imprecision.

In conclusion, the behavioral indicator of party preference has been consistently utilized as an independent variable to "explain" dependent variables such as perception and interest. However, these also have been obtained by behavioral indicators. Is one an attitude and the others not? If they all infer attitudes, then why is party preference seen as the independent, or causal, variable? The authors do not deal with important questions such as these.

We have thus seen that the notion of party preferences has been an important variable utilized in the attitudinal explanations in Voting. Basically, this concept is very similar in meaning to the notion of political predisposition employed in The People's Choice. The two have, however, been inferred from different behavioral indicators. Do the authors of the next voting volume, The Voter Decides, employ a similar concept, and if so, what behavioral indicators do they use in inferring its existence?

The notion of party identification is a key concept in The Voter Decides.¹⁷ Measurement of party identification was inferred from verbal responses to questionnaire items. The basic question read as follows: "Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as a Republican, a Democrat, an independent or what?"¹⁸ For those who responded as Republicans or Democrats a further classification was obtained on the basis of the respondent's view of himself as a strong or weak Republican or Democrat. Independents were also asked if they

saw themselves as closer to one party or the other. A seven-fold distribution of party identification was thus established--strong Democrat, weak Democrat, independent Democrat, independent, independent Republican, weak Republican, and strong Republican. All three studies mentioned to this point seem to mean much the same thing by political predisposition, party preference, or partisanship, and party identification. Nonetheless, this attitudinal concept has been inferred from three different measures, namely, group memberships, vote intention, and a direct questionnaire item. The nature of the behavioral indicator used very much affects the type and kind of explanation that can be offered. For example, in The Voter Decides it would be possible to correlate party identification with vote intention. Although this is not done, party identification is compared with actually turning out to vote in an election. Noting the difference between the Republican victory and the Democratic advantage in party identification the authors conclude:

This discrepancy supports the presumption which is implicit in this analysis that for most people party identification is not the same thing as current intention to vote for one party or the other.¹⁹

In other words, actual turnout has been equated with vote intention. As a result, we really do not know how a measure of vote intention, as employed in Voting, would correlate with party identification. Indeed, the attitudinal explanations offered with regard to party preference and party

identification in Voting and The Voter Decides seem diametrically opposed. Different behavioral indicators have been utilized to infer attitudes which are similar in meaning. It is therefore apparent that these measures both cannot be "correct". Since party identification seems to be explicitly designed to improve on previous measures of partisanship, this is an extremely important point. The failure of the authors of The Voter Decides to be precise in utilizing similar behavioral indicators to make their comparisons has cast doubt upon their above conclusion. Without conceptual clarity in the employment of attitudinal indicators we have no way of knowing how comparable the "attitudes" are.

The next voting volume, The American Voter, also utilizes a notion of "partisan choice" as a key concept in their attitudinal explanations.²⁰ The problem they face in developing behavioral indicators appears to be somewhat magnified in comparison to the other studies. We have seen that the attitude concept has been developed in a more sophisticated fashion in The American Voter. For example, and of particular relevance to the discussion here, the authors have presented a picture of an attitudinal system.²¹ Further, they have explicitly defined attitudes as being composed of affective and cognitive components.²² In the first instance, behavioral indicators are required for each attitude in the system. In the second case, indicators are required for both affective and cognitive dimensions. An immediate problem is

apparent here. How would some behaviors be used to denote affect, and others to denote cognition? Let us turn to their treatment of the system of partisan attitudes, as employed to explain voting choice, to determine how behavioral indicators are used.

The authors first present a justification for utilizing a system of partisan attitudes toward objects in the immediate political environment.

. . . (A)ttitudes toward the objects of politics, varying through time, can explain short-term fluctuations in partisan division of the vote, whereas party loyalties and social characteristics, which are relatively inert through time, account but poorly for these shifts.²³

In other words, it is their expressed feeling that measures relying on notions of party loyalties and social characteristics are inadequate in accounting for short-term fluctuations in the vote. This seems to be an expression of dissatisfaction with the attitudinal explanations offered in the other voting studies.

In developing their system of partisan attitudes the authors utilize only affective dimensions. The cognitive dimension is not explicitly measured as such. Apparently they feel this usage is justified as they see cognition and affect as being closely mixed.²⁴ Perhaps this is not an unreasonable position to adopt, as attitude research suggests that the two are strongly related. At any rate, they define six dimensions

of "individual partisan feeling".²⁵ These include:

. . . the personal attributes of Stevenson; the personal attributes of Eisenhower; the groups involved in politics and the questions of group interest affecting them; the issues of domestic policy; the issues of foreign policy; and the comparative record of the two parties in managing the affairs of government.²⁶

They further state that these measures are designed to indicate direction and intensity of feeling.²⁷ Verbal responses to free-answer questions are employed as a means of ascertaining each attitude dimension. However, they do not feel that it is necessary to tell us how the features of direction and intensity are measured. This is unfortunate as it would be extremely interesting to note the types of verbal behaviors that they would regard as tapping the direction of feeling, as opposed to those types of verbal behaviors that would tap the intensity of feeling. This would not be an easy task. Attitudes toward the six objects, or as many objects as attitudes are ascertained for, are combined into a scale composed of a continuum varying from Democratic to Republican. According to a respondent's positioning on this scale, prediction is made of his probable voting choice. Actual voting choice, as verbally reported in post-election interviews, was used. The authors subsequently determined that 85 percent of their sample was consistent with their hypothesis.²⁸

Unlike the other studies, the authors of The American Voter make an attempt to explain some of the possible error sources to account for the unexplained variance.²⁹ These

include the possibility of false reporting of behavior in the post-election interviews. In this instance, the vote reported was less than 3 percent more Republican than the true division of the votes cast.³⁰ Unfortunately, they do not manifest the same concern with their other verbal behaviors.

In comparison to the other voting studies, the authors of The American Voter have shifted the conceptual focus, although much of the same meaning still attends the various notions of political predisposition, partisanship or party preference, party identification, and partisan choice. In the latter two cases voting choice is "explained" by the particular attitude, whereas in the first instance it is utilized as a validity criterion and in the second instance as a behavioral indicator of the attitude. We can thus see that all utilize different behavioral indicators from which the existence of their "attitudes" are inferred. This factor has resulted in differing attitudinal explanations.

In conclusion, the above discussion has focused on a central theme permeating the four major American voting studies. This examination, as a sampling of points of major importance to each study, gives an indication of the problem faced in treating attitudes as dispositional variables. We have thus seen that the type of behavior chosen over alternate behaviors in the operationalization of the attitude concept makes a great deal of difference to the subsequent attitudinal explanations.

FOOTNOTES, CHAPTER V

¹Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet, The People's Choice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), pp. 25-27, 174.

²Ibid., pp. 16-25.

³Ibid., p. 25.

⁴Ibid., p. 27.

⁵Ibid., p. 26.

⁶Bernard R. Berelson, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and William McPhee, Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1954), pp. 14-34.

⁷Ibid., p. 14.

⁸Ibid., p. 17.

⁹Ibid., p. 21.

¹⁰Ibid., p. 25.

¹¹Ibid., p. 27.

¹²Ibid., p. 24.

¹³Ibid.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 29.

¹⁵Ibid., p. 77.

¹⁶Ibid., pp. 78-79.

¹⁷Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin, and Warren E. Miller, The Voter Decides (Evanston: Row, Peterson and Company, 1954), pp. 88-111.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 90.

¹⁹Ibid., p. 97.

²⁰Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, The American Voter (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1960), pp. 64-88.

²¹Ibid., pp. 64-66.

²²Ibid.

²³Ibid., p. 65.

²⁴Ibid., p. 44.

²⁵Ibid., p. 67.

²⁶Ibid.

²⁷Ibid.

²⁸Ibid., p. 74.

²⁹Ibid., pp. 75-77.

³⁰Ibid., p. 75.

CHAPTER VI

ATTITUDE PSYCHOLOGY AND THE VOTING STUDIES

Attempting to ascertain the degree of learning transference between attitude psychology and the four voting studies is a difficult enterprise, particularly as there has not been much acknowledged interaction. In many ways, attitude psychologists appear to be more cognizant of the research findings of the voting studies than vice versa. Perhaps this is a concomitant of their commitment to a more rigorous research orientation, which has led them to those aspects of voting research that are supportive of their particular theories. Examination of the voting studies reveals negligible concern with attitude-theoretical developments.¹ Yet, they do seem to implicitly incorporate many of these features into their analyses. The absence, however, of an explicit, formal relationship with attitude psychology hinders the assessment of learning transference. The following discussion attempts to overcome this difficulty with the creation of a dialogue between the two disciplines. To this end, the schools of thought, as examined in Chapters I and II, are utilized to evaluate each of the four voting studies. Before proceeding, it should be noted that this discussion is intended to be general, and certainly not comprehensive in terms of the

ideas examined. It is my intention to apply the general orientations of each school of thought to the major themes and specific attitudinal conceptualizations in the voting studies.

Beginning with the Neo-Gestalt school of thought, we can see that in many ways they would be generally favorable to all four voting studies; that is, they would likely state that the voting analysts agree in principle with them. The nature of this agreement varies from study to study.

In The People's Choice, social group memberships were regarded as primary determinants of individual attitudes-- "Because of their common group membership, they will share similar attitudes and will exhibit similar selective tendencies."² We have seen that a central measure, the Index of Political Predisposition, was constructed on the basis of such an assumption. As a theme predicated upon a commitment to social influences, this position would be acceptable to the Neo-Gestalt school. The Neo-Gestaltists, however, would want to go much further in their analysis; for example, although agreeing that social influences are important, they would ask for a somewhat different perspective to deal with them. They would not be as interested in the aggregation of one's social groups as in the individual's perception of these. Following this principle, they would be critical of the manner in which the notion of "cross-pressures" is developed in The People's Choice. Again, their criticism would be leveled at the failure to deal with "cross-pressures" as perceived, or cognitively

represented by the individual. In other words, the Neo-Gestalt school would generally feel that the analysis of The People's Choice has not been carried far enough; that their focus on situation is necessary, but not sufficient. To the extent that the authors of The People's Choice concentrated on the "field", i.e., the social, economic, and political background of Erie County, in which their study took place, they would be favorably received by the Neo-Gestalt school. It is their failure, however, to carry through with analysis of individual perception that would receive the greatest objections from the Neo-Gestaltists. The attitudinal explanations of The People's Choice, which were developed from the group level, would be subject to the same general criticism.

We have seen that an implicit theoretical model, predicated upon reference group, interpersonal attraction "theory", has underlaid the analyses in Voting. Interest in aspects of interpersonal attraction has been translated into a concern for "consistency" in an individual's social relationships. This notion of "consistency" has been further extended to include relationships among attitudes. Voting is a social psychological work. The general tenor of evaluation by the Neo-Gestalt school would thus be more favorable than their evaluation of The People's Choice; yet, they would feel that the authors of Voting have not carried their analysis far enough. The fact that they have dealt with perception would certainly place them in greater favor than The People's

Choice. To this extent, their discussion of social perception has directed attention to the questions of group support and political preference,³ and their discussion of political perception has directed attention to the questions of issues and political preference.⁴ Allowance has thus been made for analysis of the relationship between perception of group support and issues, with perception of political preference. The Neo-Gestalt school would spend a great deal more time on analysis such as this. Indeed, they would likely place primary emphasis upon the examination of the problems raised by the authors of Voting when commencing their respective discussions of social and political perception.

How is the voter's perception of group support related to political preference and what effect does it have?⁵

Specifically, we are concerned here with how voters in 1948 saw the issues of the campaign and what difference that made in their political behavior.⁶

Further, in many instances the Neo-Gestalt school would feel that their principles of perception have not been developed in a fashion which adequately treats the individual's cognitive representation of his environment. For example, consider the following statement.

It is the people with "cross-pressured" opinions on the issues or candidates or parties--that is, opinions or views simultaneously supporting different sides--who are more likely to be unstable in their voting position during the campaign.⁷

Examination of their handling of "consistency" reveals that

this is a condition which has been imposed on the individual respondents on the basis of a congruency or a discrepancy between their vote intention and the actual position occupied by their party.⁸ In other words, we have no idea if the individual perceives this "inconsistency". It is this type of perceptual analysis that would receive the greatest criticism from the Neo-Gestalt school. The general theoretical orientation of Voting, plus their rather detailed discussion of the "field"⁹ would be favorably received.

With specific differences illustrated, the evaluation by the Neo-Gestalt school of The Voter Decides and The American Voter can be subsumed into one section. The similarity in theoretical orientation between The Voter Decides and The American Voter is apparent--both focus on psychological variables as the immediate determinants of behavior. Further, both assume that this approach is justified as the impact of relevant, situational variables is seen as being manifested at the psychological level.

. . . (T)he present study did not attempt to take a detailed record of the campaign events which the members of the sample could remember and considered important. It sought rather for some more generalized conceptualization of the factors which underlie the vote.¹⁰

We assume that most events or conditions that bear directly upon behavior are perceived in some form or other by the individual prior to the determined behavior, and that much of behavior consists of reactions to these perceptions.¹¹

To this point, the Neo-Gestalt school would undoubtedly concur with the orientation of these studies. They would, however, inspect rather closely the manner in which perception is examined and used. Let us recall the central Gestalt tenets of perception being organized in as "good" a fashion as the prevailing stimulus conditions allow. Both The Voter Decides and The American Voter have developed explicit notions of the organization of psychological forces according to some postulate of "consistency", which satisfies the "good" organization criterion. Closer examination of these facets reveals a differential evaluation for each study. The authors of The Voter Decides have only treated questions of political perception peripherally.¹² As well, their discussion of the psychological forces motivating the individual has not been developed from any systematic study of individual perception of relevant political stimuli; nor has it dealt with the manner in which the individual perceptually organizes these stimuli. The Neo-Gestaltists would regard this as the major failure of The Voter Decides. Further, they would give more emphasis to the elucidation of stimuli which the authors discuss, albeit somewhat reluctantly, in the first part of their book. The authors of The American Voter, in developing their system of partisan attitudes, have relied heavily upon individual perception of certain political stimuli, as revealed through responses to free-answer questions. The authors group these attitudes according to their reasoned view of "consistency", which

violates the fundamental Gestalt tenet of individual perceptual organization. That is, although the authors deal with attitude structures, they do not deal with the individual's cognitive representation of them. They do note, however, that this may be important.

The probability model we have fitted to the interview data from a national sample assigns weights to the several partisan attitudes according to the strength of their association with the voting act across the entire electorate. But these statistical averages may distort the relative importance of the several forces in the decision of a single individual.¹³

Further, the authors of The American Voter certainly are more extensive in their discussion of political perception, and in their utilization of it than are the authors of The Voter Decides.

The fact that the authors of The American Voter have been explicit in demarcating the time period with which they are dealing would certainly be positively assessed by the Neo-Gestalt school. Their attention, which focuses on the immediate situation, does not negate the importance of external conditions for long-term analysis.

. . . (T)he understanding of external conditions becomes more and more important as we attempt to anticipate behavior over longer and longer intervals.¹⁴

Indeed, when discussing the development of party identification they place stress on external determinative factors.¹⁵ In conclusion, the Neo-Gestalt school would accept as reasonable

the limited time span and the explicit focus of The American Voter on personal (perceptual) characteristics. Objections raised would not, in principle, be serious. They relate mainly to the apparent failure of The American Voter to adequately conceptualize and measure perceptual organization. Thus, the analogy of an individual's "cognitive and affective map"¹⁶ of politics might be questioned as it seems to epitomize their view of perception--that is, a map gives directions, it does not describe the relationships among the elements on it.

The learning-behavior school, both classical and contemporary, as it applies to the study of attitudes, has focused primarily upon questions of attitude formation. Interest in communication effects, as epitomized by the Yale Communication group, represents an application of some of the learning-behavior principles to the study of attitude change. We have seen that the original position of The People's Choice was based on a paradigm of mass media influences. The Yale Communication group would undoubtedly examine these findings with a great deal of interest. In particular, they would be most interested in isolating the effects of such factors as source and content credibility, the nature of persuasive communications, the order of the presentation of communication, opinion leaders, etc. They would, consequently, be dismayed by the failure of this study to rigorously examine such factors as these.

The manner in which The People's Choice and Voting have dealt with the formation of attitudes would be generally acceptable to the learning-behavior school. The failure of these studies to be specific in describing the nature of the formative process would be criticized. In this regard, the treatment of the development of party identification in The American Voter, as a conditioned, affective tie to a political party, would fit much closer with the learning-behavior school's concern with attitude formation as a result of classical conditioning.

The learning-behavior school would differentially argue with the notions of consistency embodied in all four voting volumes. To this end, they would generally state that the learning tenets of practice, reinforcement, etc. are more reasonable explanations than those based on consistency postulates. For example, we have seen that much of the analysis in Voting has relied on assumptions about the "social rewards" inherent in developing attitudes in accord with group norms. The learning-behavior school would bring assumptions such as these to the forefront of the analysis.

The conceptualization of attitudes as dispositional variables would meet objections from the learning-behavior school. Doob, for example, regarded attitude as an implicit, mediating response. Further, he felt that since the inference of attitudes from behaviors was, at best, a risky undertaking, it made more sense to simply study the behavioral responses.

He would not, however, ask that the concept of attitude be eliminated from the voting studies, as he regards it as a useful label, or summarizing convenience. His criticism would be directed specifically at the behavioral indicators utilized in measurement. At this point, Doob would ask for more rigor, not only in terms of consistent use of indicators, but also in the number and kinds of indicators used. In other words, he would ask that the study of behavior be refined and made more precise. This conclusion could also be applied to the modern learning-behavior theorists, particularly Fishbein, who has stated:

Once we start considering the behavioral measure as an estimate of an attitude (or any other variable), we can start subjecting the behavior to the same types of critical analyses to which we subject our paper-and-pencil measures.¹⁷

Fishbein is also extremely critical of the fashion in which his discipline, psychology, has treated behavior--". . . we psychologists have never really studied behavior per se."¹⁸ Needless to say, Fishbein would also be very critical of the fashion in which behaviors are used as attitudinal indicators in the voting studies. He would be particularly dismayed with the failure of these studies to institute any measures of reliability and validity. Fishbein's evaluation would not be entirely negative, nor would that of theorists like Staats. The concept of party identification would certainly attract their interest--indeed, they would likely use it as support for their view of attitude formation occurring through the

mechanisms of classical conditioning. Further, we have seen that Fishbein viewed attitudes as being functions of beliefs, defined by their probability-improbability of occurrence. The notion, developed by the authors of The American Voter, that attitudes may function as a means to achieving a particular end, seems to have close accord with this position. Fishbein would thus regard the system of partisan attitudes developed in The American Voter, as being functions of a number of beliefs which define the probability of achieving a certain goal by the holding of a given attitude--e.g., an individual might believe that the probability of achieving social welfare assistance is greatest with Stevenson as President. Further, the manner in which the system of partisan attitudes has been combined into a single attitudinal dimension closely resembles Fishbein's formula of cognitive summation.

In general, however, the learning-behavior school, with its commitment to a rigorous research methodology, would not favorably evaluate the voting studies. As will be seen, a very similar position can be stated for the measuring school.

The measuring school would generally agree with the voting studies' conceptualization of attitudes as dispositional variables. Each of the voting studies have also conceived of attitudes as being composed of direction and intensity. The treatment of these two dimensions was very much a concern of the classical "measurement theorists". Further, the measuring

school advocated a position based on unidimensional measurement. As we have seen, this did not preclude the possibility that attitudes are multidimensional concepts--indeed, Thurstone held this position though feeling that attitudes had to be measured one dimension at a time. He would not, therefore, find objectionable the system of partisan attitudes employed in The American Voter, since they have attempted to measure these one by one. In many ways, then, treatment of the attitude concept in the voting studies is very similar to the treatment it received in the measuring school. At this point the similarity ends, i.e. the measuring school would agree only to the point where measurement starts. Their subsequent criticism of the measurement efforts of the voting studies would be quite harsh. Although they would agree that the use of behavioral responses is the only means by which attitudes may be inferred, they would also agree that the voting studies have only made a start here. Far more different, and varied, behavioral indicators would be required. As well, they would place a great deal of stress on the need for measures of reliability and validity. In general, though somewhat similar in position to the view of attitudes held by the voting studies, the measuring school was far more rigorous in its research methodology. This statement may also be applied to subsequent attitude theorists who have incorporated measurement concerns into their theories.

The contemporary cognitive consistency school would

generally be more favorable toward The Voter Decides and The American Voter than they would be toward the other two studies. Before further discussing this conclusion, another general observation can be made. This observation relates to attitude conceptualization employed in the voting studies. The cognitive consistency school, which has devoted a good deal of effort to the elucidation of attitudinal components, would not be impressed with the definitional treatment of attitudes, and other related concepts, in the voting studies. Examination, however, of some of the specific theorists does reveal some points of which the voting studies would receive favorable evaluation.

Newcomb is probably the only cognitive consistency theorist, with the possible exception of Rokeach, who would positively evaluate the general style of the approach embodied in the first two voting volumes, The People's Choice and Voting. Certainly, the implicit reference group--interpersonal attraction theory underlying Voting, and to a lesser degree, The People's Choice, is particularly characteristic of Newcomb.¹⁹ We have seen that his theory of cognitive balance was predicated upon interpersonal relationships. His famous Bennington study, conducted in the late thirties and originally reported in 1943, provided a good deal of credibility for the role played by interpersonal relations in developing and maintaining attitudes. It is incredible that such a clearly seminal study would not have been quoted and utilized

in Voting, and in The People's Choice as well. A theorist such as Rokeach could not state with Newcomb that the authors of these two studies agree in principle with him. He could, however, state that their focus on the situation is similar to his position. Of all the contemporary cognitive consistency theorists, Rokeach provides the best example of an explicit attempt to revive concern for the traditional Gestalt tenet of context or environmentalism. He would thus be pleased with the focus on the social situation, although he would ask for something more at this level. For example, Rokeach would state that mere description of context is not enough, rather it is necessary to determine how the individual dynamically interacts with his environment, and the differential impact this has on his attitudes from situation to situation.

We have seen that the cognitive consistency theorists have become highly specialized in their attitudinal foci. Nonetheless, this concern has been concentrated on one main area, that of cognitive organization. As a result, all theorists in this area would be interested in the psychological analysis in any of the voting studies. In one way or another, the cognitive theorists have focused on the interrelations among cognitive elements. Further, they have devoted much of their attention on the intrarelations of the components of cognitive elements, including attitudes. Although a study such as The American Voter posits a dynamic interrelation among "psychological forces", it does not

statistically treat these forces in a dynamic fashion, i.e., their measured impact is summated, not "weighted". This type of analysis would be negatively evaluated by the cognitive theorists. Perhaps they would even wonder why the voting studies, especially The Voter Decides and The American Voter which are founded on implicit cognitive consistency models, have not drawn upon their findings, and tested some of their hypotheses. Of particular importance here is the stress these theorists have placed on the nature of cognitive relationships. For example, Rosenberg and Abelson would be extremely interested in ascertaining the manner in which the six psychological variables of The Voter Decides, or the six partisan attitudes of The American Voter, are cognitively represented. The notion of the relative importance of cognitive elements or cognitive components has been a major finding of the cognitive consistency theorists. Failure of the voting studies to incorporate concern for the relative "salience", "centrality", "importance", etc. of cognitive elements in their impact on behavior, would be regarded as the major omission of these studies.

Sherif, as a proponent of judgmental processes theory, would find support for his position in different aspects of all four voting studies. For example, the notion of attitudes being formed in, and maintained by, social groupings is very much similar to the position adopted by Sherif and Cantril. Attitudes are seen as being rooted in social groupings. As a result, the findings of The People's Choice and Voting in

this regard, closely parallel Sherif's conclusions. Further, Sherif developed the idea of some attitudes being "ego-involved". A concept such as party identification would attract his attention here. He would be interested in determining the extent to which party identification serves as an "anchor" against which incoming political stimuli are judged. The extent to which party identification indicated ego-involvement would differentially affect the nature of the evaluative process. Accordingly, one's "latitude of acceptance" or "latitude of rejection" for a particular party would vary with the strength of his party identification. In a sense, this positioning is similar to the cognitive consistency theorists discussed above, i.e., Sherif would attribute greater "weight" to a psychological variable such as party identification in the determination of behavior. Sherif has been far more rigorous in his conceptualization and measurement of attitudes than is apparent in the voting studies. This would represent one of his major criticisms. As well, being a Neo-Gestaltist, with a particular commitment to attitude development within social groupings, Sherif would be more critical of The Voter Decides and The American Voter than the other two studies. Basically, his treatment of psychological variables has dealt with the evaluative dimension. His usage of this is certainly somewhat different than its usage in The American Voter where it has been equated with affect.

The functionalists, as encompassed in the bridge-building school, present an interesting case. Smith, Bruner, and Whites' main work was a study of political opinions. Determination of the functions served by the holding of particular political opinions was their main goal. Perhaps because of the "clinical" style of their research, rigorous conceptualization of opinions (attitudes) did not attract their attention. It is unlikely that they would be particularly interested in examining this area of the voting studies. What would attract their attention, as well as the attention of Katz, is the examination of the motivational aspects of political behavior as it is treated in the four voting studies. For example, they would be particularly interested in the conclusions of Voting, which suggest that an individual is "motivated" to maintain attitudes that accord with group standards. The explicit focus on psychological variables in The Voter Decides and The American Voter is suggestive of motivational analysis. In general, the functionalists would feel that this promise has not been adequately carried through. Further, they would certainly ask that the voting studies become more eclectic in their approach.

Conclusion. Apparent transference of learning from attitude psychology to the voting studies has not been great. The above discussion thus reveals that, although each of the voting studies can find support in various schools of thought, this support is either in principle only, or in terms of a

particular aspect of the study in question. Regardless of the degree of support forthcoming from any given school of thought, all these schools would undoubtedly react unfavorably to the general lack of rigor in the theoretical, conceptual, and operational treatment of attitudes in the voting studies.

FOOTNOTES, CHAPTER VI

¹It is, perhaps, a crude indication of transfer of learning to count footnotes. If such a procedure is used, however, we find a relative lack of concern in the voting studies for attitude-theoretical developments. Indeed, by my count, I have found only one footnote in The People's Choice, twelve in Voting (most of which come near the end of the book), six in The Voter Decides, and ten in The American Voter which have any relationship with social psychology--without necessarily making an attitudinal reference. Further, none of these voting volumes have chosen to list a selected bibliography. As a consequence, we are left with very few clues as to the theoretical orientations which have guided the development of these studies.

²Paul F. Lazarsfeld, Bernard Berelson, and Hazel Gaudet, The People's Choice (New York: Columbia University Press, 1944), p. xx.

³Bernard R. Berelson, Paul F. Lazarsfeld, and William N. McPhee, Voting: A Study of Opinion Formation in a Presidential Campaign (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1954), pp. 77-87.

⁴Ibid., pp. 215-233.

⁵Ibid., p. 77.

⁶Ibid., p. 215.

⁷Ibid., p. 19.

⁸Ibid., p. 20.

⁹Ibid., pp. 3-24. The authors devote their attention here to a discussion of the social, political, and historical background of Elmira.

¹⁰Angus Campbell, Gerald Gurin, and Warren E. Miller, The Voter Decides (Evanston: Row, Peterson and Company, 1954), p. 84.

¹¹Angus Campbell, Philip E. Converse, Warren E. Miller, and Donald E. Stokes, The American Voter (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1960), p. 27.

¹²Campbell (1954) et al., op. cit., pp. 41-68. The examination here discusses the popular image of the parties and the candidates. However, this analysis occurs in Part I of their book which the authors regard almost as a necessary evil, and does not receive further attention in the study.

¹³Campbell (1960) et al., op. cit., p. 75.

¹⁴Ibid., p. 28.

¹⁵Ibid., pp. 146-176.

¹⁶Ibid., p. 64.

¹⁷Martin Fishbein, "Attitude and the Prediction of Behavior", Readings in Attitude Theory and Measurement, ed. Martin Fishbein (New York: John Wiley & Sons, Inc., 1967), p. 484.

¹⁸Ibid.

¹⁹Theodore M. Newcomb, Ralph H. Turner, and Philip E. Converse, Social Psychology: The Study of Human Interaction (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1965).

PART THREE

CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In the following I shall present the general conclusions derived from each chapter in the above analysis. Following this, some recommendations for future voting research will be discussed.

In Chapter I, attitude-theoretical developments were traced to approximately 1950 through particular schools of thought. Examination of these schools of thought, and the contributions of some of the proponents of these schools, revealed the development of many basic principles which have underlaid subsequent attitude-theoretical developments. In particular, it was discovered that the basic Gestalt principles of environmentalism, perceptual organization, and the "law of Pragnanz" have been instrumental to subsequent attitude-theoretical developments. Asch, Sherif, and Cantril focused attention on the social determination of attitudes, and on the "situatedness" of attitudes. Kurt Lewin's idea of a "field" gave explicit attention to the background against which attitudes occur. The notion of perceptual organization and the "law of Pragnanz" have underlaid the contemporary cognitive consistency approaches. Heider, who explicitly stimulated this development, utilized these principles in

his theory of cognitive balance. Basically, the individual was seen as organizing his cognitions in as "good" (consistent) a fashion as possible. It was shown that the learning-behavior school has not made many contributions to attitude-theoretical developments. Their concern, for the most part, has focused on questions of attitude formation. In general, they have viewed attitudes as implicit responses as opposed to the dispositional view arising out of the Neo-Gestalt school. Their particular interest in rigorous research methods has helped initiate an attendant concern with attitude measurement. The measuring school brought this concern clearly into focus. In many ways, their view of attitude measurement by response tendencies is very similar to the view adopted by the learning-behavior school. At any rate, attitude measurement has become a concern of all theorists.

In Chapter II, the discussion traced contemporary attitude-theoretical developments. These developments have proceeded according to particular approaches, including the cognitive consistency approach, the judgmental processes approach, the learning-behavior approach, and the bridge-building approach. Cognitive consistency theory still embodies many of the principles developed by the Neo-Gestalt school of thought. Basically, it subscribes to the view that individuals tend to organize their cognitions in a "consistent" fashion. Further, it contains the belief that "inconsistency" is somehow psychologically uncomfortable, and that the

individual, when perceiving such a state, will act in such a fashion as to eliminate or reduce this "inconsistency". Particular theorists in this area, by focusing on problems inherent in Heider's theory, have become specialized in their theoretical formulations. Individuals such as Abelson and Rosenberg have thus discussed the problem of cognitive organization and have postulated a number of possible relations among cognitive elements. As well, they have developed the view that these relations are based upon laws of "psycho-logic". Osgood and Tannenbaum have focused on "liking relationships" and the magnitude of these. Thus, they believe it makes a great deal of difference in how intensely an attitude is held. Rokeach has explicitly dealt with the question of attitude configurations, while attempting to revive concern for situational variables. Festinger has extended many of the consistency principles with his theory of cognitive dissonance to include controversial topics such as degrees of dissonance, modes of dissonance reduction, and the notion of psychological implication. His theory is by far the most general of all the consistency theories. Newcomb has attempted to utilize principles of balance at the interpersonal level. He has thus examined relationships between individuals, rather than among cognitions. Cartwright and Harary have introduced digraph theory into the consistency postulates in an attempt to make them more specific and more general. In many ways, the cognitive consistency approach suffers from

this specialization. Often theorists seem to be talking past each other, while utilizing different terminology. Further, their ideas have not been presented in a unified, integrated system. The judgmental processes approach has had one principal adherent, Sherif, although others, such as Ostrum and Upshaw, are appearing now. This approach has been predicated upon the findings of psychophysics. It embodies the point of view that an individual develops a frame of reference against which incoming stimuli are judged. Attitudes serve as "anchors" on the endpoints of these scales and serve as evaluative standards. This approach, by focusing on attitudes as developed through, and maintained by, social groupings has contributed a view that attitudes are highly resistant to change. Contemporary developments have indicated that the learning-behavior school has not become a popular proving ground for the study of attitudes. Particular theorists have, however, utilized many of its principles in a profitable fashion. Some theorists have attempted to revive learning-behavior theory principles for the study of attitudes, as well. To do so, they have had to overcome the early learning-behavior notion, epitomized by Doob, that attitudes are implicit responses, and further, that it makes sense only to study the observables, i.e., behavior. To this end, they have attempted to develop a view of attitude as an evaluative, mediating response. Consequently, it is subject to measurement by the semantic differential. The bridge-building approach, as epitomized by the functionalists, represents an extremely

eclectic formulation. They have utilized principles derived from many areas of psychology in developing their view of attitudes serving certain functions for the personality.

The discussion of the first two chapters has focused on attitude-theoretical developments, identifying major conceptual contributions. The discussion in Chapter III was focused on major attitude conceptual problems. These included definitional problems, distinction problems, and the components notion problem. The examination of definitional problems utilized the five aspects of Allport's attitude definition presented in Chapter I. These included the notion that an attitude is (1) a mental and neural state (2) of readiness (3) organized (4) through experience (5) exerting a directive or dynamic influence upon the individual's response. As a mental and neural state attitude has been viewed as either a mediating variable or as a disposition. As a readiness to respond, attitudes have been viewed in a number of ways. These vary from a direct operational view defined in terms of response to a view defining interactions among attitudes and their consequents. The question of attitude organization was developed in the components section of that chapter. It was seen that there is general agreement among theorists that attitudes develop through experience. The fifth attitude aspect projects attention to the fact that for some attitude is regarded as having a dynamic impact, affecting not only the direction, but the level of activity. Next, a discussion

of many of the possible ways in which attitudes are distinguished from such related concepts as opinions, beliefs, and values were presented. This discussion indicated that there is general agreement that these concepts are all closely related. At this point, the discussion was switched to an analysis of attitude components. The notion of a means-ends organization of attitudes was briefly mentioned. Basically, the discussion focused on the cognitive-affective-conative trichotomy. Particular attention was paid to the question of the relationship between attitudes and behavior. Although a high degree of correspondence has been indicated between affect and cognition, the relationship between attitudes and behavior is very controversial. Part of the problem seems to result from a failure to be as explicit in behavior conceptualization as in attitude conceptualization.

The second section of this thesis began with a discussion of theoretical orientations and attitude conceptualizations utilized by the four major American voting studies. These included: The People's Choice (1944); Voting (1954); The Voter Decides (1954); and The American Voter (1960). The discussion of these studies was developmental and comparative in the sense that it analyzed the development of theoretical and attitudinal concerns from study to study in a comparative respect. It was determined that all of these studies suffered from a failure to be formally explicit and precise concerning their theoretical orientations. Further, they did not attempt

to relate their discussion to available relevant literature. Failure in this area transferred to a failure to be explicit and precise in their attitude conceptualizations.

The problem of inferring attitudes from behavioral indicators was discussed in Chapter V. The voting studies have not been particularly careful in their choice and utilization of behavior in inferring attitudes. As well, a general failure of these studies to utilize more than one set of indicators for the same attitude, plus their failure to institute validity and reliability tests, was noted.

The discussion in Chapter VI attempted to create a dialogue between attitude psychology and the voting studies as a means of overcoming the lack of acknowledged interaction between these two disciplines. The general conclusion reached here was that the voting studies might find support for the orientation of their studies, or for particular aspects of it, but could not find support among attitude psychologists at a more sophisticated level. The transference of learning between the two disciplines has not been great.

Recommendations. We have seen that recent developments in attitude theory have become more specialized and more eclectic, thus introducing a diversity and a richness to contemporary attitude theory. It is recommended that similar features be introduced into the attitudinal explanations in future voting studies. Attendant to this diversity are a

wide variety of theoretical approaches that provide a range of possible explanatory constructions. Voting theorists must become cognizant of the many variations in explanation available from attitude theory. Potential alternate explanations are available, and deserve to be tested. Application of "attitude theory" to voting analyses must, of course, proceed with a good deal more conceptual rigor than has been evidenced thus far. In short, the attitudinal explanations employed in the various voting studies can benefit from attitude psychology.

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